



Window on Jordan

By Raed Al Abed
Star Staff Writer

WHAT MAKES a taxi driver out his day short and not bother to pick up passengers to accumulate enough of income to feed his family?

"Don't you know why?" Jameel Olfemat said. "I want to get home quickly so I can watch Saudi Arabia play Denmark and hopefully beat them. Allah will compensate me for the lost dinars."

The taxi zig-zagged along the road, the driver cursing every pedestrian in sight.

It was six in the evening and the guy was in a hurry to watch the match that was going to start in

half an hour. But the Saudi team lost, and Jameel lost another day—he must have been in a bad mood all the next day.

Jameel's case is not unique. Almost everyone in Jordan, including foreign residents, are sharing the football addiction. Soccer fans or not, right now they have a common habit. While it is a temporary addiction for some, for others it is a time of tension, nerves and soaring blood pressure.

This is also a golden month for businesses, restaurants, cafes, bars and even for "short-term businesses." The innovative, and anyone wanting to make a quick buck, can set up a tent with a televi-

sion and audiences will pour in. And you would have a thriving, although, short-term business—especially if you served coffee, tea, pepsi and of course the old marghile.

Or how about setting up a makeshift cafe on your roof? Invite your neighbors to come and watch with you so they won't start complaining when you make too much noise.

Since the first game of the day starts at 3:30 local time, government employees are lucky as they clock-off at 2 pm. With a little push and

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The Star

Jordan's political, economic and cultural weekly

Le Jourdain
Supplément en français du Star

Le train-train du lundi

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Sur le chemin de croix de la drogue

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اسبوعية سياسية مستقلة

Draft law assails press freedom

By Raed Al Abed
Star Staff Writer

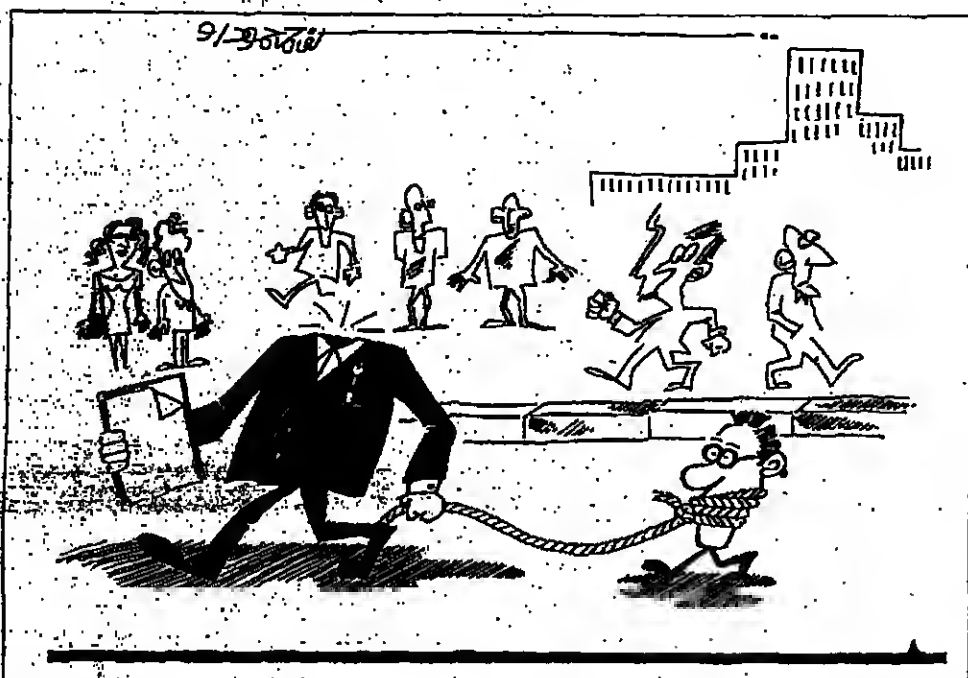
NO ONE could fail to realize that the draft press law currently in the hands of deputies aims at containing the independent press in Jordan. The proposed law, which doesn't give judges any leeway, sanctions the suspension of an accused paper during the trial in certain violations. All articles of the draft will turn the dailies and weeklies—if they survive—into official gazettes.

Despite the words of wisdom that open the draft, which talks about the right of freedom for all, the ambiguously-worded taboos throughout the draft simply kills press ethics and not only deletes the right to freedom of the press, but also access to any information for people in general. The common phrase to cling to almost every "taboo" in the draft was "unless permitted by the concerned authorities".

Jail and bankruptcy awaits journalists. The draft law links punishments for violations with other existing laws. Article 56 states that if the committed violation is deemed a crime under any other law the accused will receive the maximum penalty. Such an article is an advance verdict on certain violations which are common in the press law, the penal code and the state security law, and could lead to imprisonment for a journalist, with maximum sentence. However, it will be easy for the director of the Press and Publications Dept. to interpret any violation to taboos and fit it easily with any of the three laws.

Article 13/A orders daily newspapers to increase capital from JD 50,000 to JD 500,000. Section B of the same article orders other publications and weeklies to increase their capital from JD 15,000 to JD 150,000. Both must deposit the money in cash to banks.

Article 14 orders owners of the daily papers to present the Minister of Information with a bank guarantee of JD 100,000, while weekly papers must submit a JD 50,000 bank guarantee to the Minister. The specialized press have to guarantee JD 20,000. These new bank guarantees



mean that one maximum penalty under Article 42 could cost the paper its whole deposit.

The Minister authorizes deductions from these deposits guarantees in cases of financial penalties, compensations or fees, as required by the law.

Article 27/A states that the appointed editor-in-chief must have at least 10 years' experience as a full-time journalist. Chief editors have to check attendance at least every month at the Press and Publications Dept. Article 28 warns editors if they are absent from work for two successive months "without an excuse" they will lose their posts.

The draft also canceled the article in the current law to divest the government of its equity in the mainstream dailies. The new draft allows the government to maintain, through the Social Security Corp. and the Jordan Investment Corp., a controlling interest of 62 percent in Al-Ra'i and 32 percent equity in Ad-Dustour.

Article 42 of the draft law imposed government censorship on 14 wide-ranging subjects, 10 from the current law and four new ones—some of them extremely broadly worded—that applied all forms of written and pictorial publication.

The draft also gives the government the opportunity to establish its own newspapers, something which is banned under the current law.

The draft law expanded the content taboos adding four more subjects to the 10 already existing in the current law. The draft imposes staggering restrictions on all forms of published information including publishing or dispatching news, views, opinions, analysis, information, reports, caricatures, photos of any sort that may disparage any of the following:

- Anything that offends the King and the Royal Family
- Information related to the Jordanian Armed Forces and security forces, unless it is permitted either by the concerned authority or by a government official
- Materials which show contempt for any religion recognized by the Constitution
- Anything, deemed to offend the judicial system and its measures (new)
- Is damaging to national unity, or encourages racism, or incites hatred, discord and disharmony among members of society
- Government documents of a confidential nature
- Which offends the dignity or personal freedoms of

individuals or damage their reputation

- That contains personal insult or scandal about the Heads of State of Arab, Islamic or friendly countries, or that harms Jordanian relations with other countries, unless there is mutual treatment
- Which are contrary to public morals and ethics
- Which includes false news or rumors that offend public interests or state departments, without evidence presented by the writer proving the truth of what he has written
- Minutes of closed sessions of Parliament, without permission
- Which is intended to shake confidence in the national currency
- Advertisements promoting medicines and medical products, unless such publication is approved in advance by the Ministry of Health
- That provokes illegal public strikes or set-ins or gatherings

The same article gives the right to the director of the press and publication to seize any foreign publication that violates the articles of the draft. Something goes against

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King heads home after meeting Clinton

AMMAN (Star)—His Majesty King Hussein on Monday met with US President Bill Clinton in Washington, where they discussed bilateral relations, the faltering peace process and the efforts exerted to put it back on track.

The American President affirmed the commitment of the United States to continue its aid program to support Jordan's economy. He also affirmed his country's understanding of the military needs of Jordan's Armed Forces, and its willingness to modernize their defence capabilities, develop better training techniques and to modernize its equipment.

The two parties also discussed the peace process and the obstacles facing it, affirming the importance of exerting efforts to put the peace process back on track.

They also affirmed the importance of trying to bring about success to the US initiative, particularly after the Palestinian acceptance. President Clinton called on the Israelis to accept the initiative in order to spare the region from further turmoil.

The two parties also discussed several regional issues, like the Iraqi question,



where they called for the alleviation of the suffering of the Iraqi people. The current status of the Libyan and Sudanese sanctions were also discussed.

The meeting was attended by Chief of the Royal Court Fayed Tarawneh and

Jordan's Ambassador to Washington Marwan Muasher.

King Hussein also met with US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, and the two parties discussed similar political and economic issues.

Action needed to end family crime

By Iham Sadeq
Star Staff Writer

NO ONE can deny that the family is the most important social institution both for its members and for society. Should such a fundamental unit become a source of oppression, frustration and even crime, then it would seriously disrupt the very fabric of society.

Family crime, as termed by analysts, has begun to sound alarm bells in light of the many cases we hear about everyday. A father kills his wife and children, then kills himself; a grandson murders his grandmother; a brother kills his sister; and now a mass murder committed by a 19-year-old.

What is the reason behind this trend, which threatens the stability and security of society?

A Special Directorate for the Protection of the Family was set up for this serious matter.

"This Directorate was established last February, following a decision by the Minister of Interior upon instructions from His Royal Highness Prince Hassan," said Dr. Hashem Al Sabbagh, general secretary at the Ministry of Interior. "The main objective of the Directorate is to maintain solid and healthy family units, because the family constitutes the basic element of a successful society; one where there is no room for crime or drugs."

Many sociologists argue that the personality of every indi-

vidual is formed within the family, preparing them to face the outside world and to adapt and behave within the social boundaries.

"Protecting the family starts with education, a part of which is to teach children, through cultural and religious instruction, that certain behaviors such as drug taking, drinking or gambling are prohibited," Dr. Sabbagh explained. "If balanced ties are built, then the family will be strong enough to face any problems that may arise."

Also, the Directorate aims to clarify the roles of parents and children to establish a balanced

relationship between the two, and focus on the part played by the husband and wife and the effect this has on the psychological and social character of their children.

Dr. Sabbagh pointed out that this heavy task could not be shouldered by the Ministry of Interior alone, and that other ministries should share the responsibility, such as the Ministry of Awqaf (which can participate by activating mosques to carry out a massive awareness campaign, outlining the religious stance on crime etc.), the Ministry of Information, the

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Sabbagh

Motives for latest murders baffle society

AMMAN (Star)—Jordanians were shocked last week by the mass killing by a youth of 11 members of his family and his friend.

It was reported that the teenager's likely motivation for the crime was a "precautionary measure" in response to the family's threat to kick him out of the house if he failed the Tawjihi exams. But later it was reported that he did it in order to inherit the house and his father's company. This news remains unconfirmed.

The public's immediate reaction towards the incident was condemnation of such a heinous crime. Many described the killer to be "impious and ungrateful" for assassinat-

ing three generations of his family.

Now people are beginning to focus more on what made him commit such a terrible crime—what are the real motives behind it?

Dr. Sari Nasir from the University of Jordan told The Star that it is better to wait and see the result of the investigations, adding that all we can do now is speculate. "Generally speaking, crime is escalating in Jordan, and there are three main causes behind it," he remarked.

Society is growing and expanding, and therefore becoming more complicated.

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Economy cited as the core of Eritrea-Ethiopia conflict

By John Daniszewski

MAKELE, Ethiopia—Outside Ayder Elementary School, the grounds are pocked with holes, each innocuous-looking depression representing a crater left by a cluster bomb.

In recent days, there was a hailstorm of explosives here that sent glass, rocks and searing, twisted metal flying helter-skelter among classroom buildings.

The spray ripped through doors, concrete-block walls—and children.

"This was barbarism, there was no fighting near here," said Desalegn Fisahe, a spokesman for the government of northern Ethiopia's Tigray province, looking with indignation at the scene where more than a dozen pupils

were wounded or killed in an Eritrean air attack on 5 June.

The bombing of Makele, which killed at least 47 people, and a subsequent aerial attack that killed four people Thursday at Adigrat, 50 miles to the

north, are part of a nasty border war that has broken out between Ethiopia and Eritrea, a former province.

The war between the two former friends is not only a human tragedy, it also is a setback for US foreign policy, which had banked on Ethiopia and Eritrea to be partners in creating a new zone of stability in the famine-and-war-plagued Horn of Africa. To outside observers, the war has been mystifying.

Why should two of the planet's poorest countries, which only recently began rebuilding from decades of war and stag-

nation, choose to fight over a few hundred square miles of remote, semiarid land? Ethiopia calls it "insanity" and says it was attacked without provocation. Eritrea says that it is duty-bound to assert control over an area it was rightfully due under 19th-century treaties.

But Desalegn and many residents here discern more in the recent bombings than a dispute over frontiers. They think Eritrea is motivated primarily by economics—that it is lashing out against Ethiopia's Tigray province, in part out of frustration with a region that could become a commercial rival.

Tigray, Ethiopia's northernmost province, adjoins Eritrea. It traditionally has been known for growing grain and raising cattle and sheep but lately, attention has shifted here to industry.

Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi is a Tigrayan, and, under his leadership, the central government in

Addis Ababa has been funneling more resources to the far north, including investment and development projects.

Eritrea, struggling to make its economy function, has not welcomed the competition, said Nefsanet Asfaw, a member of the Ethiopian Parliament from Tigray. "They think that we shouldn't have factories that they have," Desalegn agreed, asserting, "The Eritreans say it openly: that each of these industries is like a bomb pointed at them." Makele, indeed, looks like a boomtown.

Situated in a watered valley surrounded by plateaus and mountain ridges, the city of 115,000 people bustles with commerce and enterprise. Its roads are crowded with giant trucks, camel caravans and donkey trains, all carrying goods off to markets in different directions.

Since the end of Ethiopia's 17-year civil war in 1991, a number of govern-

ment-owned and private factories have opened here, some built by Tigrayans returning from the United States and other places of exile.

They are making leather products, bicycles and truck parts, as well as marble goods. Workers are rebuilding the main highway.

There is a new electrical substation, and half a dozen hotels are operating or under development to cater to European tourists interested in Tigray's early Christian churches and other antiquities.

The soaring spirit is epitomized by a 170-foot monument, topped by a golden globe, constructed on a hill overlooking Makele. It is meant to symbolize Tigray's re-emergence from the bloodshed and suffering of the country's long war.

Officials here think it is no coinci-

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Draft press law set to stamp out freedom of expression

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Royal orders to the prime minister asking the government not to prevent any foreign publication from entering the country, regardless of the content.

Nevertheless, one other surprising taboo stated in article 44 of the draft, bans the press from publishing information on stages of investigation, court cases, and even from reporting crimes committed in the country. It also bans publishing the minutes of any court sessions unless permitted by the general prosecution. Penalties for violations of this article also would also apply to correspondents of the foreign press and media.

The draft gave the power of the PPD to control over the work of the Press Association. Articles 8.9 and 10 gave authority to the PPD director to regulate foreign correspondents' licences, with article 10 also demanding that foreign correspondents take up membership of the Press Association. Article 11 bans any paper from hiring anyone to work as a journal-

ist if they do not match the definition of journalist as stated in the PA law.

This article will affect many journalists who work for the foreign press and media and who are not members of the PA.

The draft specifies exorbitant monetary fines for violations, that will lead to the closing down of at least 13 weeklies and hang the rest of the papers in the balance. Article 53/A states that a financial penalty ranging between JD 30,000 to JD 50,000 for any violation of the 14 taboos listed in article 42. In addition, all income from that issue of the paper will be added to the national treasury.

Penalty article no. 53/A4 states that violators of article 42 and 44 will be liable to pay further fines, ranging from JD 15,000 to JD 25,000 in addition to confiscation of income from the offending issue, as mentioned above.

Penalties don't stop at hefty fines but expand to suspension of the newspaper during trial closure of the paper following three viola-

tions. Penalties can be levied against a chief editor, publisher and writers, considering them as "partners in crime".

The draft empowered the director of the PPD to ask the court to suspend a newspaper within 24 hours.

In a clear interference of judicial independence Article 53/A5 states that the publication will be suspended by a court verdict in the instance of violations to any of the clauses in articles 42 and 44.

Closure and suspension of papers features in almost all articles of the draft. Article 53/B5, for example, states that a court can suspend a publication for a period no less than three months in case of repeated violations.

The irony is that these penalties have been expanded to reach all Jordanians, not just journalists and their bosses. Article 54/B warns that any person who "smuggles" a publication and distributes it in the country will be subjected to a fine ranging from JD2,000 to JD 3,000.

By Star Staff Writer

AT 1:30 pm last Tuesday the director of the Press and Publication Dept., walked into Parliament carrying copies of the new press and publication draft law. It was an unusual way, since the draft law is usually delivered by the government mail.

However, the excited director who was responsible for drawing the draft, sparked a wide-spread protest in the country for the penalties and restrictions it imposed against press freedoms. The "punishment law" as many describe it, has already been submitted to Parliament to be given top priority.

The government drew the draft without taking into consideration any of the suggestions made by the Press Association. Leading sectors in society including popular organizations and NGOs are joining the press community in their denunciation of the draft.

Salem Al Nahas, general secretary of the People's Democratic Party, criticized the law. He says that the

The draft law

What do the people think?

Lower House has the right to reject this draft and put forward a counter draft of its own.

He says that a law of this kind is not urgently needed, the government simply wants to speed up the economic restructuring program at the expense of the press and to stop it from criticizing Israel.

The president of the Jordanian Writers Association, Fakhri Qawar was equally harsh. He described the amendments to the law as unconstitutional, stressing that the Constitution upholds the freedom of expression. He pointed out that the draft is against the "Fourth Estate," something that would hinder it from operating freely as publication owners are overhauled by heavy financial obligations. Qawar believes that if the law is passed then it would be another blow to the democratic process.

And the list just goes on. Even government supporters are against the draft. Former director of the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Khaleel Mahadin, criticises the government's insistence on forging ahead to endorse the

new draft, despite the fact that the courts overturned the last amended press law earlier this year.

He added that Article 3 which speaks about the right to express opinions freely, is being restricted by many other articles.

Dr. Suleiman Sweis of the Jordan Human Rights Society says it contradicts recent official statements which stated that the draft would, in fact, increase the ceiling of press freedoms and democracy. "It is clear now that officials deal with public opinion through misleading tactics which would create a crisis of trust between popular sectors and the nation's representatives."

He wonders who will then dare to disclose the truth? Will a staff journalist be eager to present all his evidence with the threat of stiff penalties hanging over him?

Mr. Sweis describes the draft law as a setback in Jordan's commitments to Human Rights pacts, the National Charter and the Constitution. He appealed to parliament to reverse the draft law, and called on the

public and human rights institutions to do their best to prevent its endorsement.

Hani Dahlah, general secretary of the Arab Human Rights Organization was of the same opinion. He said that the finances are excessive and the draft should be studied thoroughly by all concerned parties.

Former deputy, Saleem Zubi, said even the press law of 1993 was more acceptable. "We expect press freedoms to increase, not go back."

But surprisingly the President of the Associations' Council, Husni Abu Ghaida, had a somewhat different tone. He said the law had positive signs as it handles expression of freedom in a flexible manner.

However, he added that fines imposed on the press should be logical and applicable. He said however, that the ball was now in the parliament's court.

"They will have to study each article properly before passing it, to show that our press operates under the umbrella of a modern press law," he said.

For the Record

Jordanian-Lebanese businessmen meeting

AMMAN (Star)—The Lebanese ambassador to Jordan has announced the opening of the first trade section of the Lebanese Embassy in Amman. The announcement came during a meeting that was organized in Amman on Saturday by the Jordanian-Lebanese Association in cooperation with the Jordanian Businessmen Association. The section will begin its activities early next month and will serve as a center to encourage Lebanese exports to Jordan and Iraq. Jordanian-Lebanese Businessmen reviewed, during a meeting held at Lebanese embassy in Amman, ways of promoting economic and trade cooperation, as well as establishing joint investment projects between the two countries.

Jordan's history and archaeology

AMMAN (Star)—His Royal Highness Crown Prince Al Hassan and Her Majesty Queen Margaret of Denmark opened in Copenhagen, Sunday, the Seventh International Conference on the History and Archaeology of Jordan. In addition to Jordan, the conference is expected to bring together 175 archaeologists and anthropologists from many countries including Denmark, the United States, Australia, Belgium, Germany, Canada, Spain, France, Britain and Sweden. The conference, whose main theme is Jordan at the Millennium, is organized by the Dept. of Antiquities and the University of Copenhagen. In addition, the conference will include workshops on 'Conservation and Heritage Site Management', and 'Pottery: Edomite, Moabite and Ammonite'. Meanwhile, Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Akil Beltaji and Director-General of the Department of Antiquities Ghalib Bishah left Amman for Denmark, to attend the conference which is held at the University of Copenhagen.

Amman, Tehran air flights

AMMAN (Star)—Royal Jordanian (RJ) has resumed its regular air flights to Tehran after a 20-year hiatus, with an average of two weekly flights aimed at serving businessmen and increasing religious tourism between the two countries. An official delegation headed by Minister of Transport, which includes the Awqaf Minister and the Director General of the RJ, will accompany the first RJ flight to Tehran.

Prime Minister meeting

AMMAN (Star)—Prime Minister Dr. Abdul Salam Majali received on Saturday the Speaker of the Australian Parliament Ian Sinclair and his accompanying delegation, in the presence of State Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Dr. Khalid Al Zoubi. Mr. Majali pointed out to the importance of the Australian delegation's visit to Jordan. The Prime Minister also commended Australia's position on the peace process, adding that it supports the US position on the peace process. The Australian official on his part praised His Majesty King Hussein's policies on international issues, especially regarding the peace process. Mr. Sinclair said that his country fully supports all efforts that aim to break the deadlock in the peace process.

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Economy cited as the core of Eritrea-Ethiopia conflict

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ence that the bombed school is near Makeda's industrial zone, a mile from where the government is building a modern cement factory.

Similarly, at Adigat, helicopter gunships fired rockets at a new pharmaceutical plant and set fire to a grain silo storing the province's food surplus.

The cement and pharmaceutical plants were showpieces of Ethiopia's industrialization program. But for Eritrea, these factories pose an economic threat.

If Tigray can produce its own cement and medicine, it would no longer need to buy such products from Eritrea.

Nelsamnet, the member of Parliament from Tigray, said Eritreans—who were colonized for decades by the Italians—have always looked down on Tigrayans as their country's poor relations.

Although the populations of Eritrea and the province of Tigray are roughly equal, at about 3.5 million each, and they share the same language—Tigrayan—Eritrea has long looked at Tigray mainly as a source for natural resources and cheap labor to build its own industrial base. She added, "They boasted that they would be the Israel or the Singapore of the Tigray of Africa."

"But Tigray is not following that script, and the lawmaker noted, "The point is (this relationship) should be a partnership." At the Makeda hospital, where 100 of the 135 wounded are still receiving care, Sagalu Tomalu, 48, said from his bed that economic jealousy was the only reason he could understand for Eritrea choosing to attack this city, about 100 miles south of the contested frontier.

Like many others here, Sagalu, an executive with a

heavy-machinery rental company, was wounded in a second sortie after he rushed to help victims of the initial bombing raid.

"Nobody expected this. I think they were desperate, because all of their economic policies have failed," Sagalu said of the Eritreans.

"This is truly an economic conflict," Eritrean media have offered different explanations, saying the bombings in Makeda were retaliation for Ethiopia's bombing of the airport in Asmara, the Eritrean capital, while Adigat was attacked because the town was being used by the Ethiopian army as a staging and logistics center.

While it is hard to see any logic in this conflict between countries that were close until a short time ago, it is clear that economic factors have contributed to tensions.

Eritreans fought a 30-year

guerrilla campaign for independence from Ethiopia. In 1991, when rebels defeated the Soviet-backed dictatorship of Mengistu Haile Mariam, the Eritreans, de facto, achieved their goal, as the regime that then came to power in Ethiopia had backed Eritrean independence.

There were smiles all around when Eritrea's sovereignty became official in 1993.

The two countries' economies were based on the Ethiopian rift, until last November when Eritrea issued its own currency.

That step has caused disruptions in trade, because, to Eritrea's irritation, Ethiopia said that all transactions between the two nations, now would have to be settled in hard currency, as with Addis Ababa's other African neighbors.

To some Ethiopians, Eritrea has been living for a long time off their largesse. Before the present conflict, Eritrean businesses profited by importing goods for ultimate sale to Ethiopia's huge market of 60 million people.

With its Red Sea ports, Eritrea also made money by exporting to the world the produce from landlocked Ethiopia. "They don't have coffee, they don't have cattle, they make very minor export items," a Tigrayan businessman in Makeda scoffed, discounting Eritrea and its business potential if it does not repair relations with Ethiopia.

Action needed to end family crime

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Ministry of Social Affairs, and the Ministry of Administrative Development. This is in name but a few. The Directorate stresses that prevention is better than cure, but if problems arise then there should be a mechanism in place to handle them and to provide solutions.

"This applies to all forms of violence, from the husband towards his wife or kids, and vice versa," Dr. Sabbagh continued.

He also pointed out to another important issue, "Today there is no differentiation between victims of rape and those who commit the crime, as both are imprisoned in the same jail. Some youths are detained in prisons, sharing the same space with hardened criminals."

Dr. Sabbagh wondered how we could protect rape victims in a society where the tribal system still exists? At the moment, she is kept in government custody to prevent any further crime, having committed against her, but it would be better to place her in a rehabilitation center.

However, as Dr. Sabbagh explained, "We need to find funds to build these centers, and provide them with specialized and experienced doctors, social workers and psychiatrists."

The legal aspect of dealing with violent crime must also be addressed. It is imperative to know how to judge violent actions, and to determine whether protection or intervention by the Directorate is required. "We hope to open direct hotlines, so that families can contact us if any member is exposed to violence from within," he added.

Another question is if the Directorate does intervene to settle a dispute within a family, will it be complying with existing legislation? This is why the Ministry brought together ministries, NGOs and other voluntary institutions (local, regional and international), and formed the Higher Coordination Committee for the Protection of the Family.

"We asked them to present working papers on possible preventive measures, treatments and the necessary corresponding legislation required," concluded Dr. Sabbagh.

The committee is headed by the general secretary of the Ministry of Administrative Development, which produced a report from all the working papers. It called for the formation of an independent Higher Council for the Protection of the Family, with its own financial and administrative departments and general secretariat.

"Thus, four sub-committees were introduced; for prevention and guidance (to put forward strategies and awareness plans), for treatment of victims (to put forward schemes to handle victims including women, men or children), a legislation committee, and a follow-up committee to supervise the three previous committees and to evaluate their achievements. Referring to three generations of his family," Dr. Sabbagh stressed, "This type of killing is uncommon in our society. The real motive for the crime has not yet been disclosed, but of course such action must have had roots," he said.

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Motives for latest murders baffle society

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Economic factors also play a significant role in rising levels of crime. It is important too, to take into consideration the pressure imposed by parents on their sons which sometimes leads to conflicts between the two generations. "Parents always press their sons in study hard and get high marks, notwithstanding their own desires or abilities," Dr. Nasir added.

Commenting on this latest incident, Dr. Nasir elaborated,

"Undoubtedly his personality must be disturbed and, after being pressured by the family, he might have had a breakdown and committed the crime."

Dr. Nasir called on the government to pay closer attention to social problems to Jordanian society as they directly affect levels of crime.

However, few seem to sympathize with the killer and say that he must be abnormal or be suffering from psychological problems.

One analyst trying to understand the killer's motive stressed that many people suffer under oppressive parents or have other frustrations, whether at school or in their daily lives. They are being brought up to be aggressive. "Inside us lies two personalities, the soldier and the philosopher. The first likes to be strong and powerful, while the second prefers to be quiet, romantic and mostly dreaming," he said. "Also, in our daily life, things are complicated and people with heavy burdens and responsibilities

become tense and start to lose control over their nerves. In a split second their outrage could turn them into murderers."

One student said that many parents force their children to study well in order to pass their exams, a policy often unpopular with the children themselves. A conflict may then arise within the family and reach a stage where issues cannot be settled in a peaceful manner.

Another student sees the conflict between generations as the problem that brought this incident to such a dramatic end. He believes that we have to reform our families and "reshuffle the system", altering our way of life to avoid future massacres of this nature. Poverty, stress or psychological illness may be motives for violent crime, but surely not Tawjithi exams.

Nowadays, Tawjithi exams are the source of much sarcasm—a time bomb that could explode at any time. Parents, elderly brothers and sisters are advised to take care of Tawjithi students, or else.

Intermarkets tops creative awards in Kuwait

INTERMARKETS KUWAIT was recently honored as the top regional advertising agency at the 3rd Al Anba'a Advertising Awards.

Intermarkets won top Awards in:

The Fashion Category for River Island and on behalf of M.H. Al Shayn; the Hotels category on behalf of the Kuwait Sheraton and Towers; the Banking/Investment category on behalf of Gulf Bank; and the Mid-size Cars category for the Nissan Ramadan Promotion on behalf of A.A. I-Babbain.

Furthermore, Intermarkets won the Bronze Award in the general category of locally created ads for its Gulf Bank Golden Investment programme as well as the award for the Second-Spender with Al Anba'a Newspaper.

Commenting on the accolade, Fady Mouannes, Managing Director of Intermarkets Kuwait said, "The blend of great clients and highly motivated account handlers are the greatest stimulant for our creative people to continue delivering their big ideas which has



led to repetitive recognition, firstly by Advertising Age, and now from Al Anba'a, which we hasten to thank for their continuous recognition of professional agencies in Kuwait."

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Join the craze, watch football

Continued from page 1

shove they could probably get home just in time for kick off.

But the victims of this international soccer festival must be the private sector. Company employees never stop scratching their heads or fidgeting in their seats when the clock strikes 3:30.

At this time sports editors must have the best jobs in the world. Lucky devils, they watch all the games, while the rest of us just have to find an excuse. Only very few companies extend their lunch hour so that their employees can watch the game.

Often a lost hat hinders the flow for an employee. At the end of the World Cup, employees may have to face a backlog of work—if they haven't already lost their job—unless the company boss has inflicted a few black eyes to save his venture.

Last week, a teenager killed 11 members of his family, one of the six most heinous crimes in Jordan's history. For soccer fans, however, analyzing this crime will have to wait till they find out who will carry the golden cup.

The deadlock in the peace process is no longer a big worry. Lucky Benjamin Netanyahu—his ear can have a rest for a month. Only grandmothers will be raising their hands to the sky with a tired voice to cry "God rid us of him". You won't hear a peep out of their sons till the end of the World Cup.

The Star

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JORDAN

W E E K



An unconventional
report on Jordanian
news and views edited
by Marwan Al Asmar

Joining the fold

Politically speaking it could now be said that the Islamic Action Front (IAF) and its affiliates, the Muslim Brotherhood, have de facto entered the country's parliamentary institutions. The IAF's decision to call for the dropping of membership of Abdallah Al Alzaitah and Muhammad Al Azzam which prevented them from running in the last parliamentary elections, means that the Islamic movement, like it or not, is a legitimate entity within the Lower House. IAF General Secretary Safwan Azzam has since said that the two parliamentary deputies can now participate fully in the political life of the IAF. In that respect, the Muslim Brotherhood—the organization that called for the boycott of the last parliamentary elections, and adhered to by the IAF—opposed candidate about the decision allowing the two deputies back into the fold. Institutional officials simply said the "defining decision" is purely an IAF internal affairs matter. And political circles looking what they are, are not having well about. They are saying that this last action really means that the Islamic movement must no longer be a party in parliament, but the back door. But this is exactly the opposite of the IAF's intention, deputy general secretary of the IAF. He categorically stated that there is no deputy that represents the party in parliament, and added that those who participated in the last elections went against the party line and acted individually. On the other hand, to prove that they are not far from the IAF, he stated that the party membership of Hassan Al Usaybi, currently serving as Minister of Administrative Development in the Majlis government.

Tougher

The Tougher course are going relatively smoothly this year. More than 90,000 pupils will get their exam down sometime this week, and then the long wait begins. The results are due to come out in the second half of July. However, there has been some complaints. Students have complained bitterly about papers 1 and 2 in the Maths exam. They say that some of the questions are not within the school curriculum. Despite this, there is no sense of the stress that surrounded the exams last year. Let's hope that things continue to run smoothly.

Water

The Ministry of Water could be cracking down on those who are using surface wells without a license. The Water Authority have already started issuing warnings to 30 people from Nablus Street in the Jordan Valley, who are said to have unauthorized surface wells. The Authority has given them 30 days to close down the wells or they could face legal action. This decision has met with some anger among agricultural farmers, farmers and owners of these wells. They say that the reason why the wells have been dug up in the first place is because of a shortage of water for irrigation purposes. Farmers said generally that if they close down the wells then it would make a heavy blow to agriculture.

Tanks

Anyone can open a tank from according to the Ministry of Defense. General news said that the tank is a mobile, regional and gold capital tank from the 1970s. For the Zorp and the Jordanian National Congress, the tank is a symbol of the Jordanian National Congress, and the tank is a symbol of the Jordanian National Congress. The tank is a symbol of the Jordanian National Congress, and the tank is a symbol of the Jordanian National Congress. The tank is a symbol of the Jordanian National Congress, and the tank is a symbol of the Jordanian National Congress.

National Congress

The 25th National Congress will be held on 25 July. This particular date was deliberately chosen to coincide with the last Jordanian National Congress held in 1973. Preparations are already underway and the political program of the Congress is being drawn up. The preparatory committee held its first meeting last week at the headquarters of the Islamic Action Front, and was attended by former Prime Minister Tahir Al Mousa and Ahmad Al-Obeidi, Governor of the Jordanian West Bank, and other senior officials of the Jordanian political scene.

A look at public freedoms

AMMAN (Star)—Public freedoms are one of the underlying factors in any democracy. And Jordan is no exception, as is evident by the setting up of institutions and non-governmental organizations to safeguard public freedoms of authority. The Public Freedoms Committee (PFC) of the Lower House is one of the standing committees that regularly consider the issue of public freedoms in Jordan.

PFC head deputy Muhammad Al Azzam says public freedoms have a speciality of their own in Jordan, which is subjected not only to the laws of the land but to values, social norms and traditions. In this respect, he added, our understanding of public freedoms would be somewhat different to those that apply in Britain.

Mr Azzam says that there are really no prisoners of conscience in this country. He said that the PFC has visited prisons in Salt and Irbid but found that the number of prisoners with political beliefs is very limited. There are, however, inmates from different religious organizations, especially in the

Salt Prison. He added that 30 of these have already been released, and that some of them belong to religious organizations like the Basmal Al Islam. Other prisoners facing similar charges, or facing charges such as "not clear" under about 1700. Speaking in various public forums earlier this week, he stated that the number of people being detained has increased recently. He pointed out that while he was not condemning the detention, which he believes is understandable in the light of recent bombings and attacks, the objective is to get to the bottom of the problem, to get the attacks, and to release others quickly. He also said that the Public Freedoms Committee has received a number of complaints from ordinary citizens arrested by police who say that they have been beaten.

He pointed out that the Committee suggests the holding of public trials—like the one that was going to be held to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the 1973 Revolution, and others in support of King Hussein's position was advised by the Ministry of Interior.



Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, consoles one of the relatives of the two airforce pilots who were killed when their helicopter crashed Sunday while on regular training duty. Tuesday. He visited both families of the deceased in Dir Abi Saad and Jerash. Earlier His Royal Highness Prince Muhammad, visited the Headquarters of the Royal Jordanian Air Force and inquired about the circumstances of the tragic incident.

Decentralization leads to good governance, seminar stresses

By Marwan Al Asmar
Star Staff Writer

THE CONCEPT of 'decentralization and good governance' involves the participation of central government with the private sector, NGOs, and labor unions. All these sectors should be involved in decision and policy making. This definition was given by Dr Zuhair Al Kayed, director general of the Jordanian Institute of Public Administration (JIPA).

"Conceptually the first objective is to improve the standard of living of all the people in the world, alleviating their poverty, and stimulating economic development in the developing countries," Dr Kayed explained.

"Decentralized governance" was the theme of a three-day workshop held this week in Amman under the patronage of Prime Minister Dr Abdul Salam Al Majali who addressed the opening session by saying, "Freedom, participation and trust are essential factors to be taken into account. What we need is to open our minds and improve the interaction between us. So, if you want to succeed, capacity don't impose." Dr Majali continued, "I believe we need to change the system, to clear the gap between leaders at all levels and the people they work with. After 50 years in

the field, I believe that decentralization is a state of mind. So it can't be a fake one."

Representatives from India, Pakistan, as well as Poland, South Africa, the Philippines, Uganda, Honduras, Brazil, and Senegal attended the conference, which was hosted in Jordan.

"The intention is to benefit from all the international experiences in government decentralization," Dr Kayed continued. "Particularly in the area of improving service delivery to citizens in a manner that corresponds with their expectations."

Dr Kayed told The Star that the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), which cooperated in holding the conference, selected participants according to the capability of their institutions to conduct scientific research. That is why they selected the JIPA.

"First, we identified 10 countries representing the world, then we invited research institutes in each country to submit their studies and research," said Mr Robertson, principal technical advisor to the (UNDP). The best research institute was then selected to conduct the study.

"Our purpose is to use national research institutes, instead of external ones as local ones have a greater knowledge of their country."

Mr Work told The Star.

Mr Work stated the UNDP's reason for suggesting this event. "We noticed that people in developing countries seem to have an emerging view of 'good governance'." He continued, "People believe that good governance involves the participation of people at all levels. Others believe, however, that it involves the role of law, or partnership between the government and private sectors."

Participants will identify cross-country comparisons, as well as best practice in decentralized governance.

"The scope of analysis has widened enormously since 1970. Before, decentralization was essentially looked upon as a process of administrative devolution," said Mr Jürgen Lissner, UNDP Resident Representative.

"Now we know that decentralization is almost a way of life because it is tied inextricably with goals such as participation, transparency, the

role of law and accountability," Mr Lissner added.

"Our dispute differentiates between political, administrative, spiritual, and market decentralization," Mr Lissner continued.

The debate surrounding the growing decentralization dispute is good news indeed, as the more refined the diagnosis, the better the prescriptions and prognoses.

In addition, a visit to the JIPA Municipality was scheduled, to meet with the mayor and hear about the government's bid to decentralize.

"All of us in this project are looking for ways in which poverty indicators can be reinforced. To put the experience of ten countries into one room facilitates the valuable academic exchange of information which is very beneficial," said Mr Richard Humphrey, a participant from South Africa.

Latest CSS poll reveals interesting facts

THE RECENT poll about democracy and political life carried out by the Center of Strategic Studies in the University of Jordan reveals some interesting facts. About 74.7 percent of those polled say that Jordan has passed half way in its democratic process, while 17.5 percent believe that the country is still in its initial stages. Only 6.6 percent believe that Jordan's democracy has reached full maturity.

A figure of 15.3 percent believe that participation in political parties is guaranteed to a great extent. However, 51 percent say that the lack of participation in political parties is to do with the fact that they don't have clear policies on most issues in public life. However it is the Islamists who come on top.

About 59.4 percent believe that the Islamic Action Front (IAF) is the nearest to representing their political, economic and social ambitions. However, this is down from about 65.8 percent in 1997. Also with 26.3 percent, the IAF was the most known among political parties, this was followed by the National Constitutional Party, the Arab Bath Socialist Party, and lastly the Communist Party. What is revealing however, is that 96.2 percent of those polled said that they have never belonged to a political party, but the percentage of those that are willing to join political parties has increased since 1997.

Again on the parliamentary front, it is different as 51.5 percent believe that deputies should not become ministers, while just over nine percent believe that the deputy who becomes a minister won't be able to give enough time to his constituents. On women participation in political life, its different again.

While 33.5 percent believed that the participation of women in the government is "effective to a medium extent", she not because an active participant in the diplomatic corps or in political parties. However 77.1 percent expressed dissatisfaction with the performance of the deputies in their electoral constituencies. Nor did they believe that the deputies have executed the electoral programs that they were elected on. Lastly, only 46.9 percent said they would participate in the coming local elections.

Viagramania makes it to Jordan?

AMMAN (Star)—The Viagra craze has now reached Jordan. Unconfirmed reports say that the attractive, blue colored tablets are being secretly sold in Zorp, despite the decision taken by the Ministry of Health to ban the drug. Are people taking the drug out of curiosity, or does it really enhance levels of sexual activity?

After a two-hour visit to Zorp, where the rumor spread, there was no tangible evidence that the drug is available. However, one official confirmed that other tablets having the same effect as Viagra were seized in some pharmacies and were confiscated.

It is reported that the pills are coming from the Gulf states, Egypt and the West Bank.

Some people market the pill at JD20. This means that there is a great demand for the drug, but some pharmacists said that they are reluctant to sell the pill because of its side effects and because the drug has not been officially licensed in Jordan.

The drug can have negative side effects on patients who suffer from heart problems, diabetes or hepatitis. Also, it taken with other kinds of medicines it could lead to eyesight problems, or even death.

Some pharmacists say that if this drug has found its way to Zorp, it will be available in other parts of the country as well.

However, people are continuing to look for the miraculous drug in all pharmacies, insisting that it is not dangerous. One pharmacist said that the availability of the medicine in Jordan depends on the amount of time it takes to be registered, and to receive a licence.

Saudi Arabian Airlines gives creative award to Intermarkets



AFTER AN exhaustive review which included presentations from six of the most qualified advertising agencies in Saudi Arabia, Saudi Arabian Airlines recognized Intermarkets Advertising as having the worldwide marketing communications account in partnership with its international associates TBWA and its PR consultancy Alkhatib/Intermarkets Public Relations, together with its international associates Berman Media.

In his statement on the appointment, Mr Abdullah S. Al-Jalal, Saudi Arabian Airlines' Vice President Advertising and Marketing Programs said, "After careful evaluation of the six presentations, it became obvious that Intermarkets with its established multi-disciplined communications setup and its world renowned associates, offered a full mix of creative excellence, strategic planning skills coupled with the product know-how that would serve the airline best in the long term."

Intermarkets Advertising provides services for its clients through 10 regional, full service agencies based in Amman, Bahrain, Beirut, Cairo, Damascus, Dubai, Jeddah, Kuwait, Riyadh, and Taif, while TBWA is the fastest growing global network which has been named as the 1997 "Agency of the Year" by Advertising Age.

Mr Edwin Garmichael, chairman and CEO of the Intermarkets Group, commented on the appointment saying, "We are delighted with the added responsibilities and look forward to continuing our close partnership with Saudi Arabian Airlines expanding our task of helping in building the unique position of our client as a world class airline with a distinctive Saudi character—not to the travelling public in the Middle East only—but all around the world."

Saudi Arabian Airlines hosted a lunch recently to celebrate the new appointment which was attended by Prince Bandar Bin Saud Bin Khalid Al Saud, Chairman of Alkhatib/Intermarkets, accompanied by the Agency's senior executives.

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NAWAZ SHARIF, Prime Minister of Pakistan

Our Say...

A regressive press law

SINCE THE resumption of democratic life in Jordan in 1989, the issue of press freedom has been the fulcrum of political controversy and the pinnacle of national attention. Three times in the span of five years the government had to take on the people's deputies, political parties, professional associations, decision makers and public opinion to pass legislation regulating the Jordanian press. And each time it did so it came under attack for doing too little to advance and protect freedom of press in this country.

The three legislative battles, each with its own quirky outcome, represented a typical demonstration of the law of diminishing returns. The 1993 law was hailed as the most liberal in the region, although some believed it was too liberal and others thought it fell short in many areas. The law unchained the Jordanian press from decades of government control and heralded a golden era of press freedom that went hand in hand with a set of progressive laws that legalized political parties, ended martial law and consecrated personal liberties and human rights.

As we know, this phase was marked by certain transgressions and abuses by a minority of newspapers and journalists, not untypical for a country making a slow transition into full democratization.

A change for the worse took place last year when the government imposed a temporary press law that represented, without doubt, a major regression and departure from the "liberal" approach of the early 1990's.

The notorious temporary law was widely condemned inside and outside the country. It was drafted as a punitive law aimed at restricting the freedom of journalists and publishers, and threatening the majority of Jordan's colorful weeklies with forced closure. It was indeed a triumph for Jordan's legal system and its fledgling democracy that the law was finally annulled by the High Court on constitutional grounds.

For a short period of time it seemed as if the government's insatiable passion for reversing the course of press freedom in Jordan was checked. But this week, a new draft law was unveiled and for the third time journalists, political parties and the public are crying foul. The spirit, as much as the wording of the draft, reeks of ill intentions aimed at muzzling the press and checking its vibrancy. The law stipulates that freedom of expression is a constitutional right of every citizen but then spells out tens of articles that negate that right and intimidate journalists and publishers with hefty fines and closures.

The draft law was prepared, just as the temporary one, in isolation from public and professional input. It is a legislation that, if passed, promises to cut short the relative independence that the press now enjoys.

The press should remain a watch-dog, monitoring the activities and exposing the short-comings of the three branches of government. It is the only guarantor of a system of checks and balances that serves the interests of the people first and foremost. Any excesses by the press should be dealt with by the press community in conjunction with opinion leaders in the country. A free press is the only viable mark of a democratic society in action.

A-tests hailed as 'triumph for Islam'

By Molly Moore and Kamran Khan

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan—In Friday prayers at mosques across Pakistan, Muslims have celebrated the country's first nuclear tests as a "triumph for Islam."

In the London-based Saudi Arabic daily al-Sharq al-Awsat, a recent headline declared, "The Islamic bomb: A dream come true."

"From all over the world, Muslims are happy that Pakistan has this capability," Iranian Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi said on a trip here, three days after Pakistan detonated its second round of nuclear explosions on 30 May. "Until now, they felt in the Middle East that only Israel had the capability... now they feel confident."

For more than two decades, the prospect of a nuclear arms race in the Middle East and South Asia has raised the notion of an "Islamic bomb"—the entry of an Islamic nation into the ranks of the nuclear powers and its impact on religious, ethnic and political conflict in one of the world's most volatile regions.

Now that Pakistan has become the first Islamic nation to successfully test a nuclear bomb—with six detonations on May 28 and 30 in response to India's five two weeks earlier—the question of an Islamic bomb and its potential role in the regional balance of power is the focus of international hand-wringing.

For many Muslims, Pakistan's entry into the ranks of declared nuclear states is considered a security blanket in a region where two non-Islamic states—India and Israel—possess the most advanced nuclear programs, although Israel has not acknowledged having one.

At the same time, the prospect that Pakistan could share its nuclear technology with other Islamic states, or serve as their protector, concerns many Western analysts who fear nuclear materials and technology falling into the hands of countries the West has branded state sponsors of terrorism, such as Syria and Libya.

Since Pakistan's nuclear explosions, Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has tried repeatedly to disavow the concept of an Islamic bomb and has said Pakistan will not share its nuclear technology. "No one should give religious color to the success achieved by our nuclear scientists," he told reporters during a trip last week to Saudi Arabia. "It is incorrect to call it an Islamic bomb."

Sharif ordered his party leaders and

Cabinet ministers to avoid injecting religious overtones into their statements on the nuclear blasts, according to government officials.

"Nothing gives me more offense than the use of the phrase 'Islamic bomb,'" Tariq Alataf, a spokesman for Pakistan's Foreign Ministry, said in an interview.

"There is no such thing as an Islamic bomb. This is a weapon for the self-defense of Pakistan—period. There is no question of transferring the technology to anybody. This is deterrence for Pakistan alone."

Myron Weiner, a sociologist and South Asia expert at MIT, is one of many analysts who say they are concerned that if Pakistan is pushed to the brink of financial ruin—as many say could result from sanctions imposed by Washington and oth-

When the US government announced its sanctions against Pakistan after the underground tests, Arab nations quickly rallied around Pakistan. Within days of the blasts, representatives from Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Oman and Qatar, as well as Iran, traveled to Pakistan to voice economic and moral support.

Likewise, the Arab news media around the world were filled with rousing support. The London-based al-Sharq al-Awsat wrote that many Muslim nations would "release a sigh of relief, while the blood will freeze in the veins of the decision-making powers, especially Washington, after Pakistan entered the nuclear club."

Former Pakistani Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, father of two-time prime minister Benazir Bhutto, declared in the early 1970s that Pakistan should launch a nuclear weapons program and announced that the world should have an Islamic bomb to counter the nuclear arsenals under the control of Christians, Communists and eventually Hindus.

With the advancement of Israel's nuclear program, the Arab world has become increasingly uneasy.

The acquisition of nuclear weapons by an Islamic nation "would make them equal to the two peoples in their region who were neither Arab nor Islamic, but who already had nuclear weapons or the ability to make them—the Indians and the Israelis," journalists Steve Weissman and Herbert Krosney wrote in their account of the Middle East nuclear arms race entitled "The Islamic Bomb."

"Now the Muslims are not behind the Christians, Jews, Hindus and Buddhists who were already nuclear powers," Qari Saeed-ur-Rehman, 52, who leads prayers at the Masjid Al-Noor in Karachi's Nazimabad district, said in reference to the other nuclear powers. He added, however, "Pakistan's nuclear power should only be used when there is a genuine threat to Islam as a religion, but not in any territorial disputes facing many Islamic countries."

But Karachi medical student Shahid Ali Khan, 22, disputed the religious leader's view. "We should identify it only as the Pakistani bomb, instead of the Islamic bomb," Khan said. "By conducting nuclear tests, we have not become the guardian of the entire Islamic world. It is stupid to think that way."

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

"We should identify it only as the Pakistani bomb, instead of the Islamic bomb... by conducting nuclear tests, we have not become the guardian of the entire Islamic world. It is stupid to think that way."

Shahid Ali Khan, Medical Student

er capitals after the nuclear tests—it might respond by selling its nuclear technology.

"I can imagine people in the government saying, 'Why worry about sanctions and nukes? Let's show the West they have to pay a price.'"

Western analysts are not the only ones raising those concerns. An Islamabad social and human rights activist agreed. "We figured out how to pay our bills. We are going to sell our nuclear technology... it will be up for grabs to the highest bidder."

International investigations and court cases around the globe have revealed that Pakistan bought, was given or stole nuclear technology from nations around the globe in the development of its weapons.

A View from America: Gassing about double standards

By Carrie Nelle Moye
US Star correspondent

HOW MANY times have we recoiled in horror as we watched evidence of the slaughter of Iraqis at the hands of their own leader, Saddam Hussein? Some of us have interviewed survivors who spoke the unspeakable: poisonous gas encasing entire villages, all under the direction of their benevolent leader, the peasant youth turned presidential madman.

And we have believed so fervently that it could never happen at the hands of anyone in power in the United States.

Yet if new reports are to be believed, our own leaders may well have perpetrated this unthinkable atrocity in Vietnam. It would be inexcusable had we used chemical weapons against the Vietcong. There is no word that could describe the horror if it came to light that we had gassed other Americans.

But Admiral Thomas Moorer, chief of naval operations and chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff during the Vietnam Conflict, as reported jointly by CNN and Time Magazine, revealed that in 1970 in a mission known as Operation Tailwind in Laos, Special Forces troops used sarin nerve gas to rescue downed US airmen and also against American defectors. Say it isn't so.

In an attempt to clarify just what did happen, reporters have interviewed retired Gen. William Westmoreland, the US commander throughout most of the war, who replied, "I have no recollection of that."

There was a time when I was skeptical of persons who gave that line as a reply—often I still am—but I now am old enough to realize that one does forget an awful lot—an embarrassing amount. Nevertheless, even with my own memory failures, it would be impossible not to remember something of such import as authorizing the use of nerve gas.

And then there is Melvin Laird, the Secretary of Defense during the Vietnam era. He has admitted that a "small amount of nerve gas was shipped to the war zone in 1967," but added that it was never used as far as he knew.

If this is true, doesn't he wonder what happened to it? Was it left in Southeast Asia to be taken by foreign troops to be used against us or others? Was it left in Southeast Asia to be stumbled upon by unwitting children or civilians at some time in the future?

If none of these is the answer, then this unused nerve gas must have been returned to the United States. If so, where is it? Why does the former Secretary of Defense not know?

What appears to be closest to the truth is that, alas, we—the good guys—did have sarin nerve gas in Southeast Asia, although Operation Tailwind occurred in Laos and we were not in Laos—and in all probability we did use it.

Is it justifiable if nerve gas was used in order to rescue our personnel who had been downed? Here we get into a heavy moral question. Heavy indeed. Is not all fair in love and war? Do not the ends justify the means? These are eternal questions which philosophers will never agree on. But surely we can never, under any circumstances, justify gassing persons who have been labeled "deserters."

Just who determines the status of a "deserter"? Aren't there cases where persons so labeled are actually performing as undercover agents? And suppose they are not. Suppose they are bona fide deserters in the specific definition of the word. Should it be left to the discretion of the leader of a rescue mission or of a patrol to mete out a death sentence in the form of poisonous gas?

Meanwhile, Gen. Westmoreland is skeptical of "any policy targeting American deserters since there were very few—only two on an official Pentagon list—although there were rumors of two dozen or more in the war." Two seems like an exceedingly small number considering the unpopularity of the Vietnam Conflict.

But then if there were indeed more, maybe the number was whittled—make that gassed—down to two. The entire scenario is sickening, as are most war scenarios. If investigations prove that we engaged in any use of sarin in officially sanctioned operations, then we have placed ourselves on the same plane as which we have placed Saddam Hussein. No,

perhaps we have not gassed entire towns within our own country, but we consider ourselves more civilized, more humane than the Saddam Husseins of the world.

If we have used sarin on human beings, who are we to condemn, in such sanctimonious terms, the actions of others who have done the same? It is just a matter of scale and location.

Should we view all of this in perspective? Is gassing to rescue a different matter from gassing purely to annihilate? Perhaps just as everything else in life must be seen in perspective and is considered a matter of relativity, we should try to forgive ourselves.

But I cannot accept it as being as simple as that. Chemical warfare is chemical warfare. Just as each long step, it is frightening to contemplate what even the smallest use of nerve gas in times of war could ignite. But then with everyone getting nuclear weapons, perhaps it is a waste of our neurons even to concern ourselves with nerve gas? ■

Refugees flee into Albania

Albanian refugees leaving Kosovo in the wake of the latest ethnic cleansing by Serb militia. Albanians have been fleeing their homes in Kosovo in large numbers in the wake of Serbian atrocities in the region. Serbia insists that Kosovo is part of her new republic. (See story on page 6 for more details)



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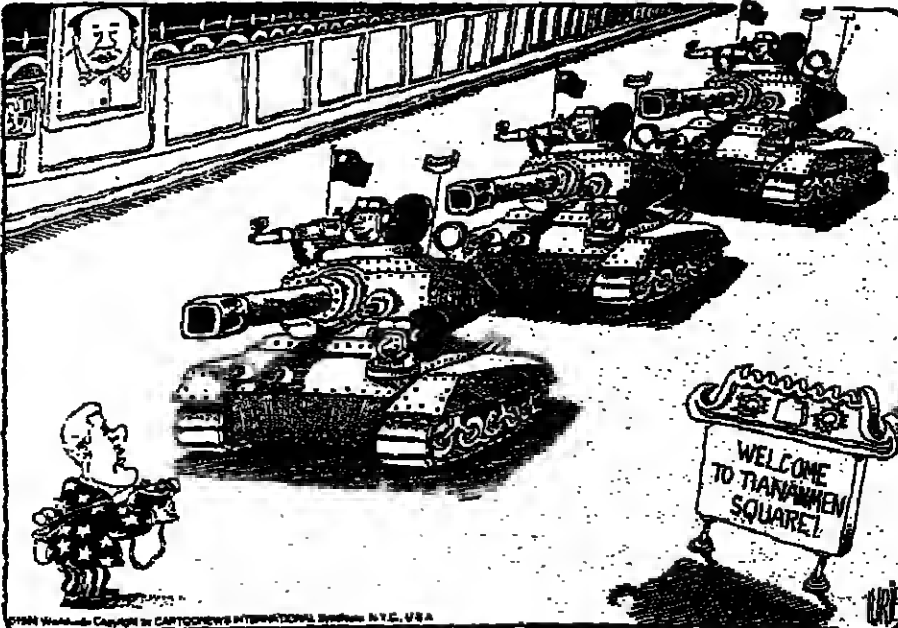
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Lurie's NewsCartoon



"Smile!"

Middle East Beat by Khairi Janbek

Heatwave in Cyprus

CYPRUS'S HABITUALLY hot summer threatened to get even hotter with news that Russian-made missiles will be installed on the island this August. It seems that the tourist season, the mainstay of the Greek-Cypriot economy, has its own logic. Imagine the idyllic holiday scene: Russian ships delivering sophisticated military equipment alongside people making use of the golden beaches as Greek and Turkish fighter jets circle overhead. It does little to contribute to the peace and tranquility desired by all.

Furthermore, what would sun and sea worshippers think about sharing their pleasures with the British Army and Navy currently conducting mass evacuating manoeuvres indicating imminent conflict? Fortunately the timetable for delivery of the missiles has been postponed till late fall, the end of the tourist season.

The Greek-Cypriots are adamant about installing the missiles and the Government in Ankara is determined to stop the whole operation. Knowing that tourism and leisure are the mainstay of the Greek-Cypriot economy, one wonders about the logic of such rearmament.

Tourists may continue to flock to the island each summer, but some are bound to be reluctant if they find themselves seeking shade under Russian-made missile launchers. The tension had already escalated with the Greek-Cypriot side joining the European Community.

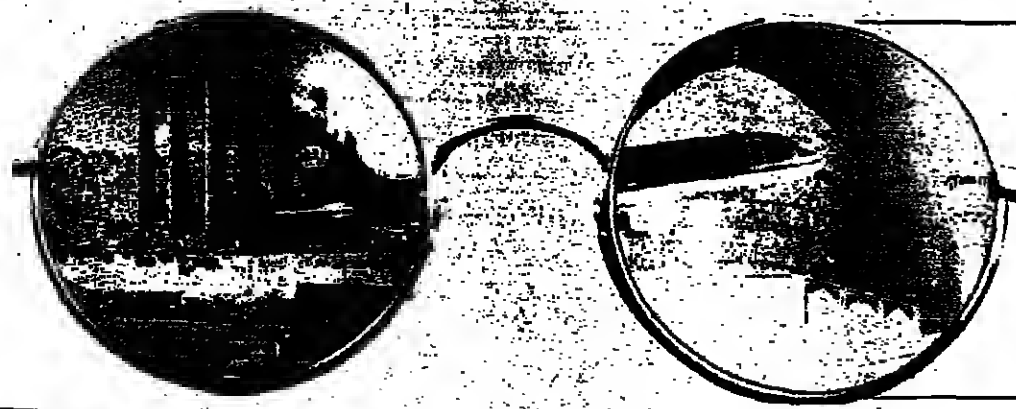
Adding the weapons dimension is unlikely to reduce it. On the Turkish side of the island thirty thousand Turkish troops are unlikely to be deterred by the missiles in the event of conflict. The range of the missiles, however, threatens nearby Turkish cities and towns on the mainland, which could lead to local war in the summer of 1999. In an apocalyptic scenario, Greece would most likely get involved, again unsettling peace in the Balkans, and the Mediterranean would become a heavily militarized zone in an age of demilitarization. Obviously, such a situation would have implications for the Arab world.

Although relations between Greek-Cypriots and the neighboring Arab states are normal, any perceived threat could put both Lebanon and Syrian ports and cities at the mercy of the Russian missiles. This, in turn, could lead to a new arms race in the region, at a time when resources should be targeted for development, and cooperation among the nations of the region is paramount to solving the fundamental problems of their collective existence. Pushing a policy of brinkmanship, at a time when the whole area is nervous is clearly not a wise thing for the Greek-Cypriots to do.

The stalled Middle East peace process does not need this Mediterranean island to further induce the prevailing psychology of encirclement. Neither does Turkey—with its conventionally cool relations with all its neighbors—need the emerging tension on the island, Greece, on the other hand, as a member of the EU and NATO, has fully integrated itself into the EU ethos and can only act accordingly. It would appear that the only reason for the Greek-Cypriots to install missiles is the island's desire to hold another bargaining chip in negotiations with the Turkish side.

An old trend appears to be re-emerging: weapons of mass destruction are again becoming the potent indicator of national prestige and the way to seek parity with stronger nations. It is worthwhile at this juncture to remind the Greek-Cypriot government that solutions to the island's disunity, refugee and property issues do not depend on an escalation of arms—such action will more likely bring about the opposite of the desired effect—but in the continuation of negotiations by all parties concerned, despite the well-known difficulties.

The Russians may yet provide the required solution. In the best mercantile tradition, they have declared that they may pull out of the deal with the Greek-Cypriot government—if Turkey allows them an opening for their military hardware market.



Tehran Non-Stop, Twice Weekly

We are pleased to announce the resumption of direct flights to Tehran. Starting June 15th, Royal Jordanian will fly from Amman to Tehran every Monday and Friday and from Tehran to Amman every Tuesday and Saturday. For more information and reservation, please call Royal Jordanian or your travel agent.

ROYAL JORDANIAN
Reflecting the Change.

Business scene

The Ministry of Tourism is launching an intensive campaign to activate tourism in the Kingdom for the year 2000. The committee formed to carry out this heavy task has met under the chairmanship of Tourism Minister, Aqoel Beltaji.

One of the parties involved is the Hotels Society, which underlined its plans for the next few years and explained how it plans to accommodate all the tourists due to arrive in Jordan. Their plan also included a cultural and entertainment programme, targeted at promoting Jordan worldwide. Also on the committee's agenda were proposals to enhance services at all tourist and archaeological sites, and give the private sector an opportunity to come up with an active tourist agenda.

Arab Banking Corporation (ABC) generated a 12.4% rise in its net profits to reach \$145 million, by the end of last year. Its assets also went up 26% to reach \$23.582 million. Shareholder rights reached \$1721 million, showing a rise of 4%.

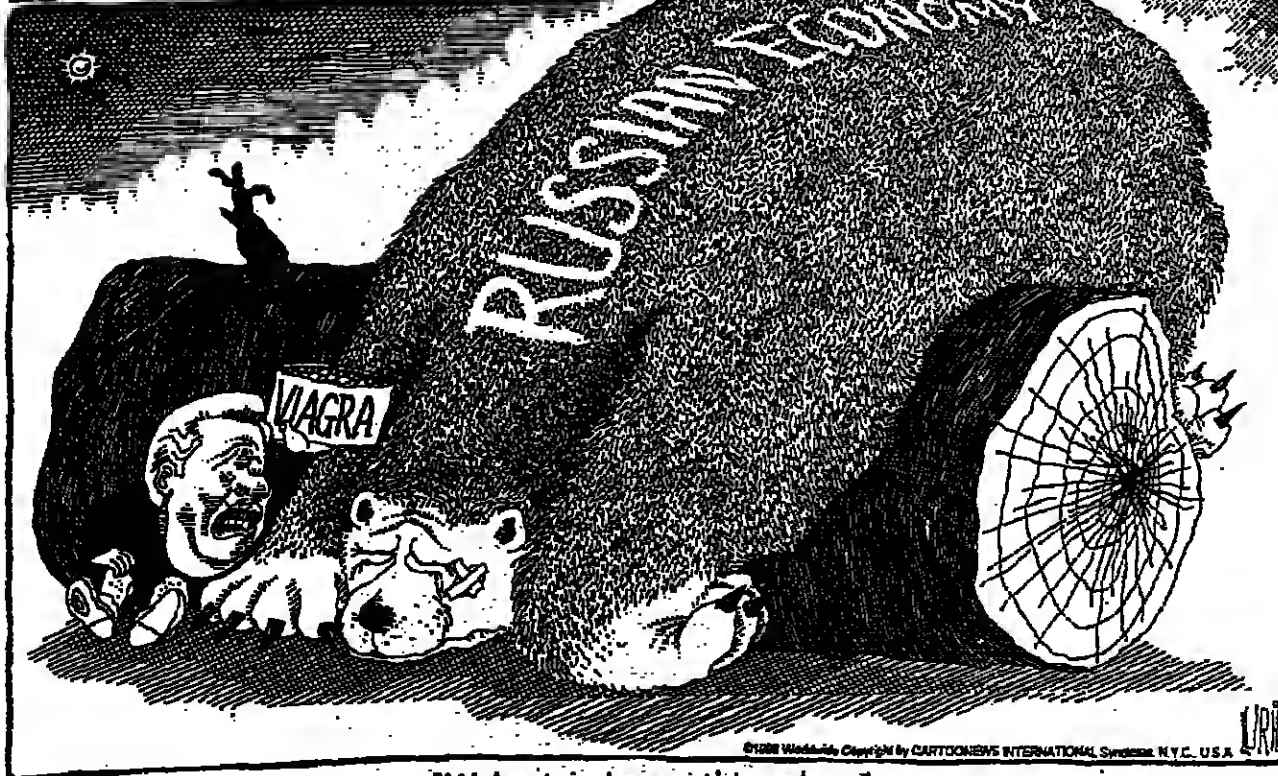
The ratio of full seats booked on Royal Jordanian Airline stood at 80.2% during the first five months of this year, according to statistics released by RJ planning committee. This figure is compared with 56.7% for the same period last year. RJ jets carried 444,360 passengers during the first months of this year, but there is no figure available on the number of travellers during the same period on RJ last year. Total airfreight cargo shipped by RJ carriers reached about 26,405 tonnes by the end of last May.

Foreign Exchange

Wednesday, 17 JUNE

	Buy JD	Sell JD
USD	0.7080	0.7100
EUR	1.1510	1.1568
GBP	0.4124	0.4145
CHF	0.4801	0.4825
JPY	0.1227	0.1233
HKD	0.5624	0.5652
SGD	0.5667	0.5685
THB	0.0419	0.0421

Lurie's NewsCartoon



"We've tried everything else..."

Challenges lie ahead for local pharmaceutical industry

By Ilham Sadeq
Star Staff Writer

JORDANIAN PHARMACEUTICAL manufacturers are facing further challenges to reform their status and put their house in order. As is the case with other branches of industry, local pharmaceutical manufacturers will have to work hard to improve their performance in order to meet these new challenges.

The philosophy of the open market and the trend towards globalization leaves little room for small entities, it requires strong companies with the most beneficial products to survive. Thus, local pharmaceutical companies must enhance their performance and conform to worldwide requirements. The Jordanian Association of Manufacturers of Pharmaceuticals and Medical Appliances (JAMPMA) is taking this seriously, and is doing its utmost to help Jordanian drug producers to upgrade their output to meet these global requirements.

Regarding medicine made in Jordan, the President of the Association Dr. Anis Mousher told *The Star*, "Jordan has become a center for the pharmaceutical production in the region and this branch of industry is highly advanced, coming second only to the

phosphate industry in terms of its volume of exports according to statistics released by the Ministry of Planning for 1997."

One of the problems, however, is that the industry is facing allegations that local producers are not respecting patent rights. Dr. Mousher explained, "the law permits any company to manufacture a new drug registered by another foreign company, provided that the method of processing and trade mark on the name of the product are changed. The Jordanian pharmaceutical industry has benefited from this law for a long time."

Dr. Mousher, who is the chairman of the Arab Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Co. and the Scientific & Medical Supplies Co. (SMS), went on to say, "Many challenges have surfaced after Jordan signed the EU partnership agreement and the preparation for its membership into the World Trade Organization."

He continued, "This trend brings new challenges, and we have to adjust to comply with the international requirements, and protect patent rights for all including our pharmaceutical



Mousher

products." These decisions are likely to have an impact on local industry as a whole and on pharmaceuticals in particular, but Dr. Mousher believes that the changes are in the interest of the Kingdom and the industry in the long run.

"It will widen the market for Jordanian products and create a healthy atmosphere for competition with international producers." Naturally, this will encourage Jordanian producers to streamline their output, improve quality, and increase the level of scientific research, and any new invention or in-

novation will be protected, which is not the case at the moment.

Dr. Mousher stressed, however, in the interim period the pharmaceutical industry will face difficulties as it depends to a large extent on the export market. These outside countries are committed to protect patented rights, and won't give permission for products that are still under patent to enter their markets. "It is important here to mention that patented products constitute a small percentage of the Jordanian production."

Dr. Mousher called on all Jordanian pharmaceutical companies to face these challenges by readjusting their position, and upgrade and developing their production policies.

Local drug producers have the potential to compete internationally, but generally speaking, a period of grace is required to help Jordanian companies pass through this

transitional period successfully with minimum damage. Thus, the paramount task of JAMPMA, in cooperation with the Ministry of Planning and other governmental institutions, is to avoid harming the local pharmaceutical manufacturers during this interim period.

Dr. Mousher expressed his enthusiasm, saying that he expected a bright future for Jordanian industries, especially pharmaceuticals. He calls on companies in Jordan to merge, to create bigger entities and factories as small companies will find the new challenges harder to comply with and many go under.

These are currently about 16 Jordanian drug companies, accessing around 50 markets, and Jordanian pharmaceutical exports account for about 10 percent of all Jordanian exports, valuing \$130 million.

New service company for job opportunities

A NEW shareholding company expected to start operating next August plans to provide new job opportunities for Jordanians, both inside and outside the Kingdom.

It will soon offer 156,250 shares for public subscription, and currently has capital valued at JD 625,000. The board of directors has nine members, three of which are government representatives and six are from the private sector. On the board, there are three directors from Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Kuwait. These three countries contribute 25 percent of the company's capital.

The company will start exporting a local work force at an average of 5000 persons a year. Mr. Samir Al-Majali, the government's representative in the company said that the government's share of the capital is 30 percent, which means that it will be supervised by the Ministry of Labour.

Al-Majali pointed out that the company's recruitment policy will do its best to market and find suitable jobs for skilled Jordanians.

This process will be well coordinated and follow a regular system. Among its objectives, the company hopes to eradicate unemployment in Jordan, reduce the state's extra financial burden, and increase the Kingdom's overall revenue.

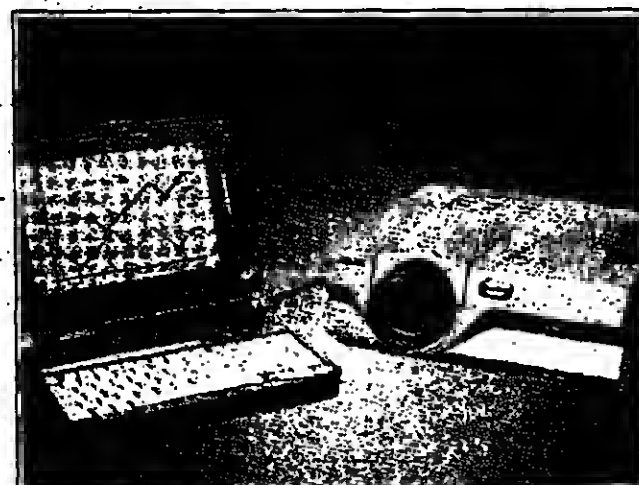
Sony launches new high-tech projectors on Jordanian market

THE FIRST in a series of new Sony LCD projectors incorporating all the key design concepts of Sony LCD projectors: high brightness, excellent uniformity, portability, ease of use and reliability, has been launched by Sony Broadcast and Professional.

The new series 600 projectors boost Sony's reputation for quality and innovation, and make them the ideal choice for professionals in marketing, training, finance, education, and administrative sectors and anyone looking for the best quality in professional presentation tools.

Designed for use with a laptop computer and ready to make the most of the 'plug and play' connectivity with Windows, series 600 brings together the best in Sony image technology and visually attractive design with a lightweight die-cast alloy body.

A growing demand for brightness, better portability and higher resolution was the inspiration for these two models. Both accept signals from VGA to SXGA, and the difference is the true resolution and brightness up to 650 ANSI lumens for the S600 model and the true 1024 by 768 resolution



with 600 ANSI lumen for the X600.

Only 12cm in height and weighing just 5.7 kg, the 600 series is truly portable, offering the user the independence of presenting anywhere. The simple 'plug and play' concept and Auto Pixel Alignment (APA) allows picture adjustment at the touch of a button.

The VPL-X600 offers multi-user benefits and can be used with two data inputs for computers as standard and also video as an option. The remote control unit, provided as stan-

dard is equipped with a laser pointer and remote mouse functions, enables computer operation and smoother, more professional presentations. Other attractive features include a three-speaker system for dynamic sound, a multi-lingual on-screen menu and range of interchangeable lenses.

With the introduction of the 600 series of projectors, Sony has exceeded customers' expectations of impressive, high quality images through an easy-to-use and competitively priced projector range.

By Maggie Farley

HONG KONG —With stock markets across Asia plummeting anew Monday, battered by the now official Japanese recession that has caused the yen to plunge in value, Chinese leaders find themselves under intense pressure to keep a vow that could drastically affect fortunes in this region and across the rest of the globe: The Beijing regime insists it will not devalue its currency, the yuan.

But each day, as Asia's economic turmoil worsens, that promise gets harder to keep, analysts and officials say.

Indeed, while the yen slid past an exchange rate of 146 to the US dollar on Monday, helping to push markets downward in Tokyo, Hong Kong, London, Singapore, Seoul, South Korea, Paris, Manila, Philippines, and Indonesia, China has been lauded as "an island of stability" in the region.

It has protected its currency while those of its neighbors shudder into free fall, making their exports much cheaper than China's.

But the price of maintaining the value of the yuan is "getting bigger and bigger," Central Bank Gov. Dai Xianglong said last week.

Indeed, Dai emphasized the "great cost" to China of keeping its word: The country has suffered a sudden drop in exports and in the flow of investment that fuels the growth it needs to carry out massive internal reforms.

Economic growth in China has slipped from 8.8 percent to 7.2 percent since last year,

according to the government. Foreign analysts' estimates are even lower.

Beijing's biggest worry is that radical reforms conceived before the Asian economic crisis erupted could founder if economic growth falls much further.

This comes at a time when millions of Chinese are to be thrown out of work as state-owned enterprises—as part of a three-year plan—are forced to sink or swim without government help. Within five years, under the present Chinese plans, banks must sort out their bad loans and workers will have to buy their own houses.

"Without devaluation, China can't reach its objectives," said Zhu Xiaohua, an official at the giant government-owned conglomerate China Everbright, at a recent economic conference. While the economic effect of keeping the yuan fixed is great, however, the cost of devaluing would be even greater: It would almost certainly spark another round of devaluations in Asia, launching the region into what one economist calls a "death spiral."

"We don't think it's going to happen," Adrian Faure, China research director at Merrill Lynch in Hong Kong, said of the prospect of China changing the value of the yuan. "The external pressures are not strong enough to cause a devaluation."

Instead, Faure forecasts a gradual depreciation of the yuan by 7 percent or 8 percent over the next 18 months.

In the midst of regional turmoil, China has been buffered because its currency is not convertible, and, thus, is

not susceptible to speculative attacks like those that helped trigger Thailand's currency crisis last July.

China also still holds a healthy trade balance, despite flagging exports: China holds huge reserves.

As for Chinese exporters, analysts say, their ability to raise trade credit and working capital is more important to them than any adjustment in the exchange rate—which would be offset when competitors were also forced to devalue their currencies.

In the end, the decision to devalue or not is mostly a political one. China has made repeated high-profile pledges to its international trading partners and neighbors to help maintain stability in the region.

If Beijing holds fast, its long-sought entry to the World Trade Organization, with special concessions, is a likely reward. If it is required by internal instability to go back on its word, it would lose great political credibility and reap the blame for further regional turmoil.

Still, there are signs of the Beijing regime's discomfort and displeasure at its current situation. Li Peng, China's parliamentary chief, made a rare break with diplomatic protocol Monday, urging Japan to stabilize its economy, noting that the yen's slide had put fresh pressure on Asian economies. Li voiced China's concern about Tokyo's economic disorder, *Reuters* news service said, to a visiting Japanese elder statesman.

The New China News Agency quoted Li as telling Susumu Nikaido, a former

Japanese chief Cabinet secretary, that the "recent continued devaluation of the Japanese yen has imposed a new pressure on the economies in Asia."

Li's comments followed a firestorm of criticism unleashed against the United States and Japan by China's leading financial dailies on Monday. The papers railed against the two countries for failing to halt the yen's slide, saying they were pursuing their own interests at peril to troubled Asian economies. The state-run newspapers also said Japanese and U.S. inaction has made it hard for China to keep its pledge not to devalue its currency.

Meantime, Hong Kong, too, is sticking to its fixed exchange rate, which has been pegged for 15 years at 7.8 Hong Kong dollars to one U.S. dollar. The Hong Kong dollar would probably be hit hard if Beijing weakened the yuan—and investors are hedging their bets.

The New World Group, one of Hong Kong's biggest investors in China, announced last Wednesday that it would start borrowing yuan instead of U.S. dollars to lessen its exposure if China does devalue. The Chinese-owned "red chip" company Shum Yip Investment Ltd. did the same.

LA Times Washington Post News Service

Business Chronicle

Aqaba port under threat!

When a qualified Industrial Zone (QIZ) was declared in Irbid as the result of an agreement between Jordan and US during the MENA conference in Doha last year, many experts questioned the objective behind this step. They also pointed out that giving products manufactured in the QIZ free access to the American markets could reflect negatively on cargo movement in Aqaba, and instead revive the Israeli port of Haifa. This scenario seems to have materialized.

The Federation of Jordanian Chambers of Commerce has recently sent a memo to the government demanding that merchants be offered incentives to use the national port of Aqaba instead of Haifa. Some merchants bring in important basic supplies such as rice, wheat, barley and sugar via Haifa instead of Aqaba.

The Federation warned that if the situation remains at a standstill there will soon be no available, empty vessels at Aqaba to carry national products such as phosphate, potash or cement to international markets.

Furthermore, this will create a shortage in the strategic reserve of these materials because the country will depend to a greater extent on small shipments arriving daily by car from the Haifa port. Consequently, workers will suffer job losses as the cargo delivery and transport through Aqaba simultaneously declines. The decline could amount to 2 million tons per year, causing a loss at Aqaba of about JD 40 million. The wider implication will be losses in all sectors of the port including transport, personnel and other related services.

The President of the Federation, Mr. Haidar Morad called on the government to cut prices and fees of cargo loading and off-loading at Aqaba and impose fines on imports coming through ports other than Aqaba, mainly on strategic supplies such as sugar, rice, wheat, etc.

This, as Morad suggests, could avoid further losses to the Jordanian economy in general and to the Aqaba port in particular.

Mr. Morad pointed out that the difference between cargo freight fees collected at Aqaba and those of Haifa is about \$8 per ton—of course, Haifa has lower tariffs. This difference is due to the fact that huge vessels can dock at Haifa, while Aqaba port can not accommodate them for technical reasons.

In addition, savings are made in crossing fees by vessels passing through Suez Canal as the trip is considerably shorter to Haifa compared with the long journey to Aqaba.

Mr. Morad stated that the general association of food-stuff importers informed the Federation that many basic goods arrive in Jordan through Israeli importers who bring their commodities via the Haifa port then sell them on to local merchants, who in turn take advantage of the lower cost.

Nevertheless, some merchants are determined to import these items through Aqaba, regardless of the loss they may suffer.

The Federation warned that if the situation continues unchanged, local merchants will stop importing their supplies through Aqaba because of the prohibitively high cost and the unavailability of vessels to carry their goods.

Yassin eyes better ties with Palestinian leadership

By Judy Dempsey

WHEN SHEIKH Ahmed Yassin, founder and spiritual leader of Hamas, the Islamic Resistance Movement, returns to Gaza this week after touring Arab states, he intends to seek reconciliation with the Palestinian leadership.

Hamas and the Palestinian Authority (PA) have been at loggerheads in recent months, with the PA cracking down on Hamas activists, and Hamas accusing the PA of bowing to the US and Israel without reaping any benefits from the peace process.

The Sheikh, released from an Israeli prison last October, spent this out during a recent tour of Arab states who pledged substantial financial aid to fund Hamas' social welfare institutions in Gaza and the West Bank.

Not surprisingly, Israeli and Palestinian officials fear some of the money will be channelled into the military wing of Hamas which claimed responsibility for the wave of suicide bomb attacks in Israel during 1996 and 1997.

The warm reception and financial pledges, however, do not reflect unanimous support by Arab states for Hamas. Rather, they indicate a mixture of emotions: disapproval of the Oslo peace accords, dislike for Mr Arafat and disdain for the way in which Benjamin Netanyahu, Israel's prime minister, is



diminishing the Palestinian economic, and especially political prospects.

These aside, the tour emphasised Mr Netanyahu and Mr Arafat who through their poli-

cies, have together and unwittingly enhanced the Sheikh's popularity.

Under pressure from Israel and the US, Mr Arafat has cracked down on Hamas and

its social welfare institutions. Hamas political leaders have been held without trial, with no access to lawyers. Islamic newspapers and social welfare institutions have been shut for several months at a time.

"The PNA is undermining the rule of law," said Hamdi Shakkara, board member of the Palestinian Centre of Human Rights. "It is reacting to pressure from the US and Israel to crack down on Hamas and Islamic social institutions even though Israel once encouraged and tolerated Hamas in order to weaken the PLO."

Hamas officials, who oppose the existence of the Jewish state, say the crackdown has brought the PA no tangible results in the peace process. There has been no halt to the expansion of Jewish settlements, no end to confiscation of land or residence identity cards in Jerusalem, no end to the demolition of Palestinian homes and no Israeli troop redeployment from the West Bank.

Yet while Hamas balks at the way Mr Arafat bows to US pressure, they deny any suggestion Sheikh Yassin will openly challenge Mr Arafat. "We do not want to fight the PA," said Ismail Abu Shanab, Sheikh Yassin's deputy, personal friend, as well as head of Gaza's Engineers Association.

"If we fight, it could lead to a civil war. This is what Israel wants. What we want is an hon-

est evaluation of the past four years of Oslo and some unity between the PA and Hamas."

That does not mean Hamas will join a national unity government with the PA. Mr Abu Shanab said it would be impossible ideologically since Hamas is staunchly opposed to the Oslo peace accords signed between Israel and the PLO in 1993 and 1995.

Instead, he wants the PA to stop harassing Hamas, as this is radicalising the movement. Such a request creates a dilemma for Mr Arafat. If the PA and Hamas agree to a 'national understanding', Mr Netanyahu will accuse Mr Arafat of legitimising Hamas. If Mr Arafat fails to reassure Hamas he will stop cracking down indiscriminately, he risks alienating a growing force in Palestinian political and social life.

"Hamas will go underground if the PA continues crack down on us," said Razi Hamad, editor of Al Ragala which is owned by the Islamic Salvation Front. "It will galvanise a strategy for the armed struggle against Israel."

Unless, said PA officials, Mr Netanyahu realises he has to give Mr Arafat and the Palestinians something concrete to make the peace process worth defending against Hamas' agenda.

Financial Times Syndication



A Palestinian family stood helpless as her house in east Jerusalem was bulldozed by the Israelis, Monday. The Israeli Jerusalem Municipality said that the house wasn't licensed. But Palestinian officials insist that this is the usual excuse given by Israelis for demolishing Palestinian houses. Since 1967, up to 40,000 houses were built by the Israelis as opposed to just 600 by Palestinians.

Draft 'war crimes' treaty seeks to end genocide

By Charles Trueheart

AFTER A century cursed by genocide, the world's nations are preparing to begin a new century equipped to punish and perhaps deter mass human extermination.

Last Monday, diplomats and jurists from about 150 countries met in Rome to write a sweeping treaty on international criminal law, one whose enforcement could override the laws of individual nations.

If a treaty text can be approved by July 17, the UN-sponsored conference would establish a permanent international criminal court to investigate, prosecute and try perpetrators of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. Aimed at bringing the world's most heinous criminals to justice, it would become "a veritable sword of Damocles hanging over the heads of all warlords and their henchmen," said Doctors of the World, a French humanitarian group that is among more than 250 non-governmental lobbying organizations laying siege to the conference site in Rome.

Depending on the terms of ratification, a permanent court could be at work soon after the turn of the century, almost certainly in The Hague, the Netherlands capital that is already home to the International Court of Justice, a UN civil court, and to the existing war-crimes tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda.

Yet, the road to a treaty text, and to ratification by the United States, among other wary nations, is so full of ruts, potholes and minefields that many fear, and some clearly wish, that the conference will produce either a toothless compromise or no treaty at all.

The draft text of the treaty has been produced over the past three and a half years by a UN appointed commission, is more than 200 pages long. Though inspired by the loftiest motives of justice and what legal experts call "norm declaration"—formally setting rules for human conduct—the Rome delegates will be crafting an intricate piece of legislation riddled with still-unresolved issues.

"I'm not sure we've seen a treaty negotiation under UN auspices going into the final conference with so many big issues unresolved," said a senior US official who requested anonymity.

At the heart of many of the debates will be the issue of sovereignty and how much of it countries are willing to give up. Those pushing for a court with the broadest prosecutorial



The treaty aims at ending atrocities like these

power, including the right to prosecute crimes and the crimes and the criminals who would be brought to justice.

"The world has seen 250 conflicts since World War II and 170 million victims, and most of the perpetrators have benefited from impunity," said M. Cherif Bassiouni, author of the draft treaty and head of the drafting committee at the conference. "The people want accountability."

Most nations favor some kind of criminal court. But governments, especially those of the United States, France and other major powers, also view the treaty through the lens of a potential defendant.

An American scholar close to the drafting process, not wishing to be identified, compared the criminal court negotiations to the contentious ones that led to the establishment of the World Trade Organization. He put the dilemma this way: "How can we defend ourselves against phony claims and still be able to bring bona-fide claims against other countries?"

In addition, a core of opinion has been formed among many major-power governments, the Pentagon and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, led by Chairman Jesse Helms, which have focused on a more specific challenge posed by a criminal court: Would the United States ever permit its citizens, notably professional soldiers, to stand trial before a "higher" court of criminal law?

"It's the My Lai syndrome," said the scholar, referring to the Vietnam War's most memorable case of US atrocities against civilians. "If (Lt. William Calley) had been acquitted, could a permanent court in The Hague have prosecuted him? For that matter, could it have prosecuted then-Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara?" Helms has said such a treaty would be dead on arrival at his committee, a key passage in its path toward Senate ratification.

Joined by France, Canada and other countries, American negotiators led by David J. Scheffer, US ambassador for war-crimes issues, will be pressing for treaty language that guarantees that states have first crack at trying such cases. The questions left for the Rome negotiators to settle are legion, beginning with basic definitions of what constitutes genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes, the core crimes of the statute.

What would be covered? Would it include inhumane treatment, taking hostages, sexual slavery, starvation of civilians, compelling prisoners to fight for you, preventing births or sterilization, or committing outrages against personal dignity. All these considerations remain unsettled.

More politically sensitive yet are possible trigger mechanisms for prosecution: Who would have the right to ask for an investigation of a crime? The UN Security Council? The state where the crime occurred? What about war crimes that take place in states that aren't party to the treaty (as China, among others, probably will not be)?

Then there's the role of the prosecutor: Could he or she launch an investigation without referral or consent? Should the court's judges supervise and approve the work of the prosecutor? Should the power to veto an investigation lie with an investigating troops were operating in the zone of killing?

There is more to fear from an impotent prosecutor, than from an overreaching one, said Louise Arbour, chief prosecutor of the United Nations twin ad-hoc criminal tribunals for the 1992-95 war in Bosnia and the 1994 genocide in Rwanda.

The greatest threat to the legitimacy of the permanent court would be the credible suggestion of political manipulation by the office of the prosecutor, or of the court itself, for political expediency. Arbour said, adding that she was not persuaded "that a weak court is better than no court at all."

But US officials insist on certain constraints on the prosecutor's freedom to pursue crimes not referred by the Security Council or sufficient state parties to the case. As if such core issues were not potentially divisive enough, the conference must also sort through such issues as whether the court should have power to prosecute armed aggression, terrorism or drug-running, and whether the death penalty could be imposed. The answers to these questions, in the end, will probably be no, sources said.

The conference also must address the issue of the court's financing, a question tied to its still-unresolved state of independence from or dependence on the United Nations. Conference negotiators estimate an annual budget of \$100 million a year, or more, depending on its caseload.

One point has been resolved: The court will only try genocide and war crimes that occur after the treaty goes into force, after a ratification process that could drag into 2000.

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

Kosovo shelling

Serbia stands defiant

By Christine Spolar and Guy Dinmore

KUKES. ALBANIA—The roar of high-flying fighter jets rolled over the mountains of Albania on Monday as NATO staged a dramatic, five-hour show of force aimed at ending Serbia's military crackdown in the neighboring province of Kosovo.

To residents of northern Albania—shepherds, woodcutters, auto mechanics and schoolboys on summer vacation—it was the sound of peace. "It's a good sound," said Bajram Hila, a woodcutter whose words were whipped away by the rush of NATO aircraft flying overhead. "I like the fact that they're coming but I just don't know if this can do anything to help Kosovo."

Since late February, Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic has launched an extensive military assault on the region in an effort to crush ethnic Albanian guerrillas seeking independence for Kosovo, a province of Yugoslavia's dominant Republic of Serbia.

In the past two weeks, thousands of Kosovo's ethnic Albanians have fled their homes and poured across the border into neighboring Albania.

Tens of thousands of others have been forced to flee their homes and are refugees inside Kosovo.

So far, at least 250 people have been killed in the fighting, which Western powers fear could ignite a regional conflict involving Albania and neighboring Macedonia, another former Yugoslav republic with a large ethnic Albanian minority.

Last Thursday, NATO defense ministers approved the air exercise as a warning to Milosevic, and ordered military planners to draw up plans for possible direct military intervention.

Milosevic flew to Moscow on Monday for talks on the crisis with Russian President Boris Yeltsin.

On the same morning, as part of Operation Determined Falcon, 85 aircraft from 13 NATO countries—including the United States—took off from 15 bases across Europe and from carriers stationed in the Adriatic Sea.

They were backed up by support planes, including refueling tankers.

According to NATO headquarters in Brussels, 28 of the aircraft left Aviano Air Base in Italy, heading first to Macedonia and then to Albania.

Jets flew across both countries and then edged within 10 miles of the Yugoslav border, a NATO spokesman said. "This was an exercise intended to demonstrate the alliance's commitment to peace and stability in the region and [our] ability to project power into the region," said Lt. Gen. Michael Short, commander of NATO air forces in southern Europe, the Associated Press reported.

Tirana, a six-hour drive south-west of here, shook from the thunder of at least 10 jets on Monday morning and the residents of the capital were overwhelmed by the noise, some worrying that the low-flying jets would nick building tops. Residents near Kukës, a northern Albanian town, about four miles from the Kosovo border, said they could hear the jets in the distance for more than an hour. Musa Kukes, 50, a road worker, dropped his shovel—the only tool he has in this impoverished country—when he heard the rumble of a distant jet.

"Did you hear that?" he said. Saka, who said he had never seen a jet before, said he saw a tiny, white flicker of a fighter jet across the deep blue sky.

"I'm very glad," he said, "because it shows that they are for the liberation of Kosovo. I hate Serbs." "I heard on the news they were going to do this," said Adrian Mehmeti, 13, grinning widely as he sat outside a car shop. "It's good for Kosovo because NATO forces can stop the fighting. They can stop the war, right?" Ironically, people in Albanian towns most affected by the flow of refugees—the border communities of Bajram Curri and Tropoje, about 15 miles northwest of here—said their skies were silent.

"Everybody was waiting for the sounds of overheads," said an international aid worker based in Bajram Curri. "For those people, I have to say, it was pretty demoralizing." The idea of independence for Kosovo has become a mantra among people in Albania in the wake of the Serbian offensive. The United States and its European allies, however, have not supported ethnic Albanian demands for independence. Instead, they have pressed Milosevic to withdraw his forces



You'll have to wait a while...The floor is still wet.

and enter negotiations with ethnic Albanians aimed at restoring political autonomy to the province that was taken away in 1989, when Milosevic instituted direct Serbian rule. Monday's exercise appeared to bolster hopes in the region that Kosovo's armed separatists, united under the shadowy Kosovo Liberation Army, may eventually warrant international approval.

On Tuesday however, the Serbian forces responded to the NATO demonstration of force by continuing their attacks on ethnic Albanian separatists in the southern province of Kosovo.

Serbia's state-controlled media condemned the exercises, running such headlines as "Nato scares Serbs," but most focused on Mr. Milosevic's meeting with Boris Yeltsin, the Russian president. Moscow said it was recalling its military envoy at Nato in protest at the alliance's show of

force and General Igor Sergeev, Russia's defence minister, accused his Nato counterparts of failing to inform him of the air exercises. On Monday, Serbian officials have spoken of an undisclosed Russian initiative to end the conflict in Kosovo, but western diplomats expect Mr. Yeltsin to urge Mr. Milosevic to comply with Nato's demands.

In a statement aimed at strengthening Mr. Yeltsin's hand, the European Union's 15 members yesterday warned Mr. Milosevic that if he did not back down he would face "a much stronger response, of a qualitatively different order" from the international community. Javier Solana, Nato's secretary-general, warned that his organisation was "preparing to go further, if required, to halt the violence and protect the civilian populations."

Serbian analysts in Belgrade expect Mr. Milosevic to test Nato's mettle, as he did during

the Bosnian civil war when it took the west more than two years to intervene.

Before flying to Moscow, Mr. Milosevic held a reception for his army commanders on the occasion of Yugoslav Army Day, during which the military was congratulated for its efforts to secure the border with Albania, the main supply route for the KLA rebels.

Some analysts believe Mr. Milosevic has a hidden agenda, put forward by nationalist ideologues, to partition Kosovo.

Nato intervention—as it did in Bosnia—would have the effect of freezing what are effectively front-line positions and give Mr. Milosevic a stronger position in any negotiations on a political settlement.

Serbian newspapers reported on Monday that the KLA was expanding its hit-and-run attacks.

LA Times - Washington Post News Service

Norwegian's Sophie Prize goes to Nigerian human rights group

The Sophie Foundation is to award the international Sophie Prize 1998 to the Nigerian environmental and human rights organization, Environmental Rights Action (ERA). In recent years a number of human rights and environmental activists in Nigeria have been imprisoned without trial. "Through outstanding courage, the organization has demonstrated that the work for human dignity, the environment and democracy must go hand in hand. This is important to emphasize in a year where we are celebrating the 50th anniversary of UN Human Rights," says Elin Enge, chairperson of the Sophie Foundation.

The Sophie Prize, amounting to \$100,000, was established last year by the Norwegian author Jostein Gaarder and his wife Siri Dannevig. It is being presented for the first time, and the award ceremony will take place in Oslo on 15 June.

Environmental Rights Action (ERA) in Nigeria

is an environmental and human rights organization, member of Friends of the Earth International. ERA has played a major role in surveying damage inflicted on the environment by oil company operations in Nigeria. The organization has also taken the initiative to build up community resource centers in the affected areas. Through these centers, the local population receives support for local environmental and development initiatives.

ERA is involved in a national campaign against international oil companies operating in the Ogoni people's land territories in the Niger delta. More than 50,000 Ogoni people have been forced to flee the area due to expropriation of their land and extensive pollution of the earth, air and water. This has led to a 75 percent reduction in crops, which in turn has led to 25 percent of the area's population suffering from severe malnutrition. According to several independent sources, up to 2000 people

have been killed in the conflict. In 1995, author Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other environmental and human rights champions, all of whom were representatives for the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP), were executed. Twenty environmental activists are still imprisoned without trial.

ERA's President Nnimmo Bassey, 37, is a poet and architect. For many years, he has been engaged in environmental and human rights disputes in Nigeria. He has been imprisoned repeatedly. An international campaign has been established in order to prevent Bassey sharing the same fate as Ken Saro-Wiwa.

Nigeria is a dictatorship and is ranked third in the world for breaches of human rights. More than 97 percent of the country's export income is derived from oil and gas.

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

International campaign against Global warming in a chill

By James Gerstenzang

BONN, GERMANY—If global warming is proceeding at an extremely slow pace, consider the tempo of the worldwide effort to reverse it. International negotiators here spent much of June arguing about an esoteric, but perhaps optimally termed matter known as Russian "hot air" and how to define such terms as "deforestation", "reforestation" and "afforestation".

They spun in circles over supplemental methods to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases, mostly carbon dioxide from burning oil and coal, before any have announced the primary steps their nations will take to reduce those gases.

They wrestled with oil-producing nations, because Saudi Arabia raised what a senior U.S. negotiator called "nuisance points" by continuing to seek the promise of international reimbursement of global warming agreements cut its oil revenue.

In fact, as government negotiators, environmentalists and business representatives (1,200 in all), broke camp Friday, there was a prevailing sense that the international campaign against global warming may be frozen.

The sessions were called to delve into details of how to implement the global warming agreement reached in December by more than 150 nations in Kyoto, Japan, and to pave the way for the next ministerial-level meeting, in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in November.

Such international negotiations rarely move quickly, and leaders of the 26-member U.S. delegation here sought to present an optimistic picture. In particular, they hope they deflated a controversy over

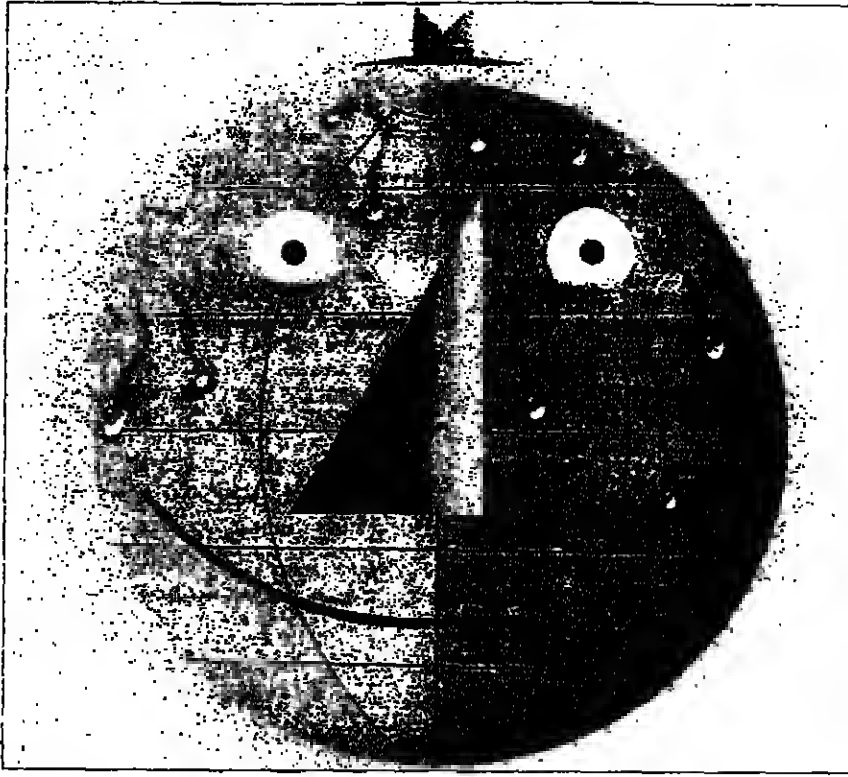
how to count the contribution that vegetation—agriculture and forests—makes in absorbing carbon, the prime culprit in global warming, from the atmosphere. The issue is crucial because the degree to which a nation counteracts its carbon emissions through agricultural and forestry policies may go a long way toward determining whether it is meeting its emissions targets.

Negotiators agreed to hand the matter to an international panel of scientists, which is not expected to report until 2000. They also agreed that they could address the matter in upcoming meetings without waiting for the report.

Another significant by-product of the sessions appeared to be a new willingness among developing nations to at least consider how they might take advantage of financial incentives intended to encourage them to reduce greenhouse gas emissions even as they try to build fledgling industries. In the past, these nations largely had refused even to discuss this for fear that it would limit their economic development.

The Kyoto Protocol called on the world's major industrialized nations to reduce their emissions of the six main greenhouse gases by an average of 6 percent over the next 15 years. The United States committed itself to reduce its carbon emissions by 2012 to a level 7 percent below its 1990 emissions. Such a cut would actually bring the nation about 30 percent below the level of emissions projected, if no mitigating steps were taken.

However, the sessions here were marked by delays, brought on by divisions in the huge bloc of developing nations and splits in the European Union.



Grouched one U.N. official at midweek: "There's no pressure to do anything."

By Friday, another official, Michael Zammit Cutajar, the executive secretary of the U.N. organization overseeing the talks, complained of participants: "They are still exploring positions, putting out markers,

protecting themselves before they can engage in a serious negotiation."

The Kyoto meeting, he suggested, mistakenly was viewed as the breakthrough in efforts to control what many scientists believe is a dangerous warming of the global climate. The scientists believe that car-

bon and other gases, which are given off by industrial processes, transportation and other manifestations of fossil fuel-fired development, trap the earth's reflected heat and act like an invisible thermal blanket insulating the planet.

Yet the Kyoto session, Zammit Cutajar said, turned out to be "only a plateau on the way to other mountains. We are now at the base of the bigger mountains. Governments are preparing themselves for the next climb. They are not anywhere near the top."

Now that initial targets have been set for emissions reductions by the industrial powerhouses, negotiators are exploring how to reach them. Negotiators are also looking for ways to encourage developing nations to join the process, a politically vital step toward winning the U.S. Senate endorsement of the pact.

Central among the proposals for lowering emissions are "flexible mechanisms." They include programs in which a country or company emitting fewer tons of carbon than its assigned target could sell to another country or company the right to exceed its own target by a specified amount.

That is where Russian "hot air" comes in. The closing of inefficient Soviet-era factories since the fall of communism has brought Russia about 30 percent below its 1990 emissions level, and given it and Ukraine the likelihood of having untold millions of tons of carbon available for trading in the international market.

Critics within the international environmentalist community, and among some official European delegations, fear that the United States, Japan and other nations that

are finding it difficult to meet their targets, will buy their way out of making reductions. "Rather than using its industrial muscle to lead, the United States wants to buy paper credits from Russia," said Patrick Green, senior campaigner in energy, nuclear and climate issues for Friends of the Earth in London.

The European Union is seeking to restrict the sale of such carbon rights to the amount saved through deliberate reduction programs, rather than including the amount achieved as a side benefit of economic contractions.

Concern that the United States will rely too heavily on such deals has prompted the European Union to press, unsuccessfully so far, for a cap on the extent to which a nation can use such supplemental measures as emissions trading to meet its obligations.

At the same time, the United States is using the possible offer of high-efficiency, energy-saving technology to gain support among developing nations that have been hostile, or at least ambivalent, toward the various trading proposals.

This prompted a split among the developing nations bloc, which includes China and India, when some grew worried that compliance with voluntary targets, as suggested by Argentina, would bring a flow of investment capital that could leave other nations at an economic disadvantage.

"You're seeing some real power politics, dirtball tactics going on here," complained Jennifer Morgan, coordinator of the global warming campaign of a network of U.S. environmental organizations.

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

The science of asteroidoids

By Andrew Derrington

IN THE Steven Spielberg film *Deep Impact*, released in the U.S. last month, millions of people are killed when a chunk of comet, 2 km in diameter, lands in the Atlantic Ocean, causing a tidal wave that inundates the eastern seaboard of the U.S. A larger piece of the same comet is about to hit Canada with an impact that would send enough dust into the atmosphere to blot out the sun for years, killing most of the life on Earth.

Unlike most disaster movies, in which scientific plausibility is an early casualty in the quest for drama and impressive special effects, this film should be taken seriously. It has impressive scientific credentials. The consultants included some of the world's greatest experts on the impact of comets.

The plot is based on the novel *Hammer of God* by Arthur C. Clarke. Scientific reviews of the film conclude that the scenario is plausible and is dealt with in a realistic way. The magazine *New Scientist* says: "The comet is the sort of size that will hit the Earth every 100,000 years or so"; it could happen.

Not only could it happen, it has, several times. On a small scale it is commonplace. Small asteroids hit Earth every day and hum up in the atmosphere. Asteroids big enough and solid enough to survive until they hit the ground are more rare. In November 1996, an asteroid caused a crater about 50 metres across in Honduras.

Ninety years ago this month, about 1,800 sq km of forest were destroyed when an asteroid perhaps 60 metres in diam-

eter burned up as it entered the Earth's atmosphere above Tunguska in Siberia, releasing between 12 and 20 megatons of energy.

Obviously, and thankfully, an asteroid big enough to extinguish most of life Earth does not strike often.

The critical diameter to cause a global catastrophe is about 1 km. The impact of an asteroid this size would raise enough dust into the atmos-

phere to blot out the sun for a few years and induce a global winter lasting several years, which could then be followed by a greenhouse effect intense enough to raise the temperature by as much as 10 Centigrade.

Many species would not survive such extreme shifts in climate. The extinction of the dinosaurs 65 million years ago, and of some 65 per cent of the species then existing on Earth, was caused by an asteroid believed to be more than 10 km in diameter.

There are many more big asteroids in our neighbourhood, although most of them in the solar system have orbits hazardous asteroids (PHAs) which can be distinguished from faint stars because they move against the background of other stars. This is in order to chart their orbits in detail, and a spacecraft is due to rendezvous with one early next year for a closer look.

So far, only about 100 PHAs have been catalogued. In March, there was a publicity scare when it was revealed that 1997 XF11, an asteroid discovered last year by the University of Arizona space watch programme, will come particularly close to Earth on October 26, 2028. A collision seemed unlikely, but the orbit could not

be calculated precisely enough to exclude the possibility completely, because the asteroid had only been tracked for a few weeks.

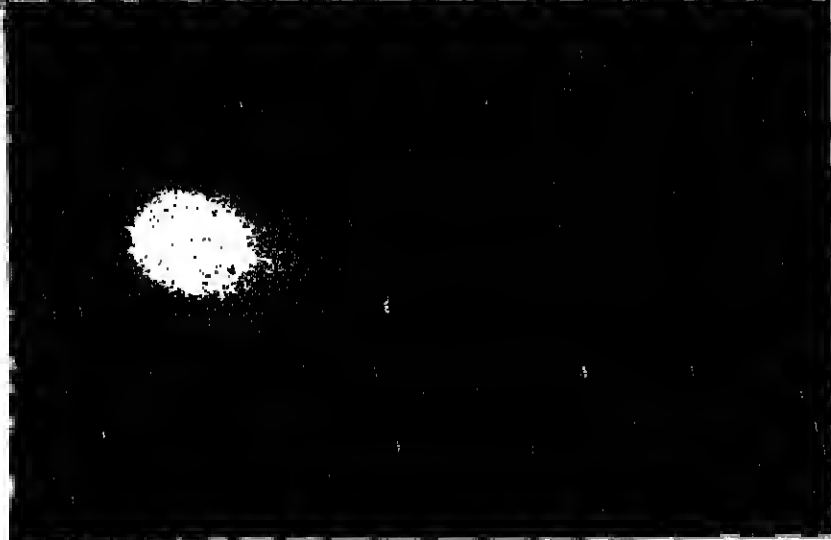
Fortunately, the orbit could be followed into the past, as well as into the future, and within a few days images of the asteroid were found in films taken in 1990. These allowed the orbit to be calculated very precisely, confirming that XF11 will not come closer than 600,000 miles to Earth. Safe, but a near miss in astronomical terms.

Some scientists are worried at the slow progress of the space watch programme. The National Space Society estimates that, at the present rate of progress, it will take 200 years to complete a systematic survey of PHAs, which are not the only possible threat. About 5 per cent of the objects that strike the Earth are comets, many of which have orbits that keep them out of viewing distance until they are within a couple of years of their closest approach.

The scientists argue that more money should be spent now to complete the asteroid survey within a few years. Curiously, the cost of doing this would be about \$50 million, about half the price of a decent disaster movie.

* The best starting point to look for more information on this topic is <http://impact.arc.nasa.gov/>. The author is professor of psychology at the University of Nottingham.

Financial Times Syndication



Preserving Mayan culture far from home

By Patrick J. McDonnell

LOS ANGELES: Flanked by village elders, the Maya priest makes his rounds. Clouds of copal incense, said to nourish the gods of creation, envelop his unhurried entourage.

He pauses to chat in his native Kanjobal with a group of weavers, exchanges greetings with a gathering of herbal healers, and stops by the workshop of an artisan. The celebrants kneel before a wooden cross, its four points representing the breadth of the universe. The scene is right out of the Maya heartland of northern Guatemala and southern Mexico, but the setting of this pageant is a tattered dance hall in South-Central Los Angeles.

Although preserving their heritage is important to all immigrant groups, the Maya here may feel that desire more acutely. Over and over, the Maya say, the loss of their culture would be a kind of death.

"A Maya may be smiling on the outside, but without his culture, he is crying inside," says Virves Garcia, a musician and community activist.

About 20,000 descendants of the ancient Maya empire live in Southern California, concentrated in two of Los Angeles' poorest districts—South-Central, and the Pico Union and Westlake neighborhoods.

Most arrived during the 1980s, fleeing Guatemala's brutal civil war, a Cold War struggle that left scores of villages razed and tens of thousands of Indians dead or "disappeared."

The Maya here stepped out of time, from a pre-industrial agricultural lifestyle based on the cycle of the "milpa," or corn field.

"The Maya in Los Angeles have gone from indigenous communities where people know each other all their lives and marry each other, to urban barrios where everything is driven by money and the clock," says James Lowrey, an anthropologist at Western Washington University who has worked with the Maya here.

For such a traditional people, the diverse and dizzying world of Southern California at first seemed incomprehensible. Although many jump them together with the mass of recent Latin American immigrants, Maya often are treated as outsiders, and they complain about fellow Latinos here who make fun of their accents and disparage them as bumpkins.

In Latin America, they have zealously guarded their culture and language through conquest, drought, earthquake and other calamities, human-made and natural.

It is their people's singularity: their language, traditional belief system, kinship ties that elders say have saved the Maya despite centuries of repression and forced acculturation.

However, in just a generation in the United States, the inexorable forces of assimilation are quickly eroding Maya identity, especially among the young.

Says Lorenzo Francisco, who played the priest in the recent pageant: "So many people come here with such high hopes and suffer a shock, lose their dignity, their culture. They forget what it means to be Maya."

Of course, some dilute a bit of Maya culture is inevitable in a place such as Southern California, with its hybrid influences and the daily struggle to make a living.

Yet the fervent hope of many immigrants is that the essence of Maya-ness can be preserved in the next generation, just as



Lorenzo Francisco, in traditional Guatemalan attire, takes part in a celebration that honors the patron saint of Santa Eulalia. Photo by Genaro Molina.

Maya culture survived the trauma of the Spanish conquest and forced conversion to the Church of Rome.

"This is not just a simple process of cultural loss; it's about how Maya culture is re-articulated in new ways in a different setting," says Eric Popkin, a sociologist at Sarah Lawrence College in New York, who has studied the people of Santa Eulalia.

Despite their humble economic station, both here and in Central America, the Maya are culturally rich: descendants of one of the hallowed civilizations of Mesoamerica, a culture that built monumental cities, pioneered studies of mathematics and astronomy, and developed a complex cosmology and writing system.

This past grandeur remains an important component of the Maya identity, which combines pre-Columbian and post-conquest influences. The Maya priest, a kind of village spiritual advisor who predates the arrival of the Spaniards, is still an influential figure. The Maya in California must balance among three distinct worlds: their tradition-bound upbringing; the vibrant Latino spirit of contemporary Southern California; and the mainstream, predominantly English-speaking U.S. society.

Spanish, not English or Kanjobal, serves as their language of survival, and is used in shops and in assembly lines, in schools and on the streets.

For many Maya, exposure to non-Latinos is largely restricted to fleeting contacts with black neighbors or with the Asian entrepreneurs who own many sewing shops.

"We wonder, 'Where are the Americans?'" asks Margarito Lopez, a Santa Eulalia native who lives in South-Central, still confused by the city's patterns of residential and cultural separation.

Almost instinctively, Maya tend to keep a low profile amid larger Latino groups. Margarito Lopez's 13-year-old son, Diego Ismael, has only been in the United States a year, but he has already noticed how Maya youth in his school refrain from speaking Kanjobal. They fear put-downs from Spanish-speaking peers.

"I feel our children here become very confused," says Francisca Pedro, a Maya mother who lives in South-Central.

"Many of us parents must work all day; we come home very late, and the children

are alone a lot. Maybe that's why some children go to gangs. They lack the kind of affection we can provide them back home."

Like indigenous immigrant groups from Mexico, the Maya tend to occupy the bottom rung of the job ladder: from the sweatshops of Los Angeles to the slaughterhouses of the Midwest, from the restaurants of Houston to the fields of northern San Diego County, south Florida and the Pacific Northwest. More than 50,000 Maya now reside in the United States, according to rough academic estimates.

Although some Maya immigrants could never cope with being displaced, succumbing to alcohol, debilitating bouts of nostalgia or other problems, most have managed to adjust, even achieve a measure of success and comfort. "Here, we feel like we're in our pueblo, not in the United States," says Margarito Lopez, 37.

Though he supports a family of 10 (eight children and his wife in Los Angeles) on a salary of about \$7 an hour in a garment shop, Lopez was able to save enough for a down payment last year and bought a two-story house in South-Central. South-Central, sometimes viewed as emblematic of the nation's inner-city woes, is generally seen by Maya as a step up from the crime-ridden Pico Union and Westlake district west of downtown.

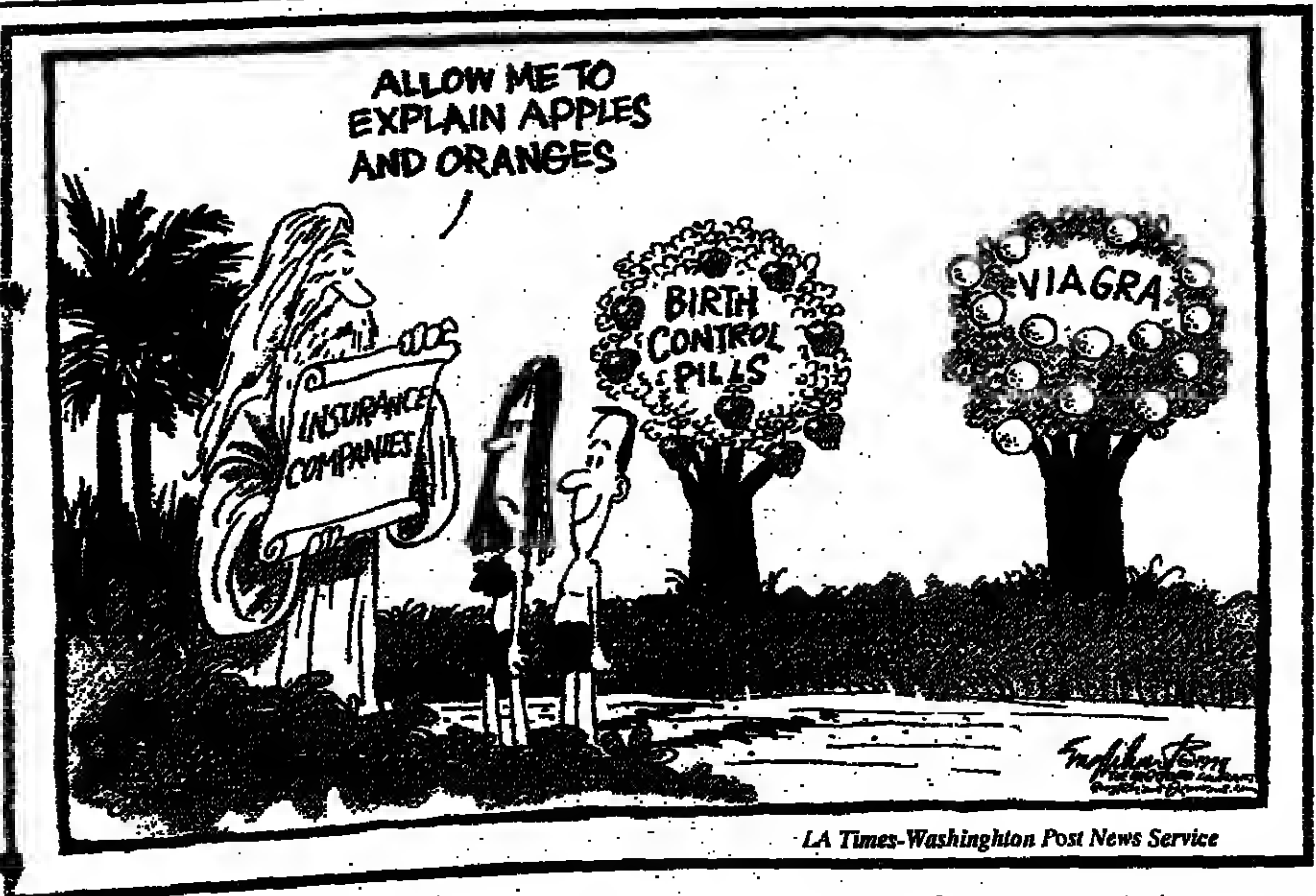
Like other immigrants, the Maya emphasize opportunities for the next generation. "My children now have improved horizons; they can work in an office," Lopez says, using the word "office" with reverence.

His eldest, Ana, 17, who served for the past year as honorary "queen" of the Santa Eulalia contingent in Los Angeles, came to the United States at 12, after a traditional upbringing.

Ana is set to graduate this year from high school, the first in her family to do so. She hopes to become an architect or policewoman, careers that would be unimaginable in her hometown.

"My culture means a lot to me. It's something very beautiful," says Ana, who speaks Kanjobal and Spanish but struggles with English. "But my life is here now."

LA Times-Washington Post News Service



LA Times-Washington Post News Service

ROUND
OWNPrincess
gives prizes

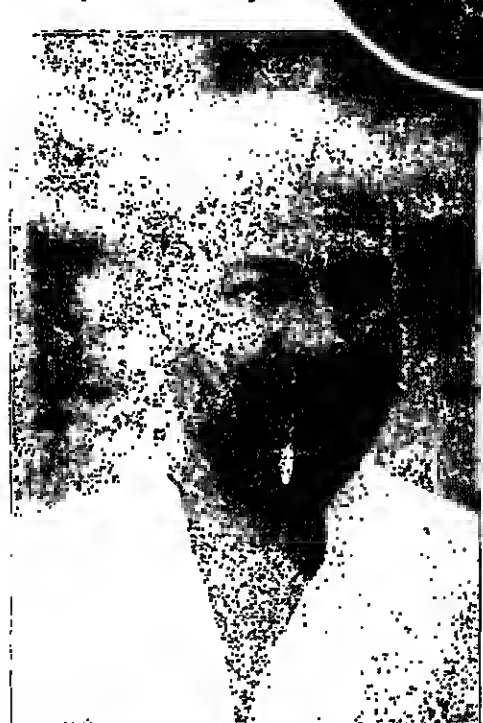
Her Royal Highness Princess Basma distributes prizes to the winners of the baseball championship that was organized by the Amman Children Forum and held in the Queen Zein Complex for Development. About 280 players competed in the championship.



Rashid Koraishi

An artist full of new
Algerian voicesBy Kofi Attah
Special to the Star

Simple but colourful, modest but inspiring, Rashid Koraishi's outstanding exhibition "Letters of Clay and Silk" is currently charming both Arab and international art lovers at the blue room at Dar al Funun. Koraishi's visions of paradise evoke victory over violence with their cool atmospheres and empty spaces full of dreams.



Koraishi

country's agony of a conflict estimated to have killed about 62,000 people since 1992.

The artist's singular use of black and white or black and gold etching and silkscreen are legendary, and create a uniformity that links his character to nature and the universe. "Letters of Clay and Silk" gives the visitor a strong sense that it is wrong to demonize Algeria. After the violence and devastation it is time to meditate on more peaceful times.

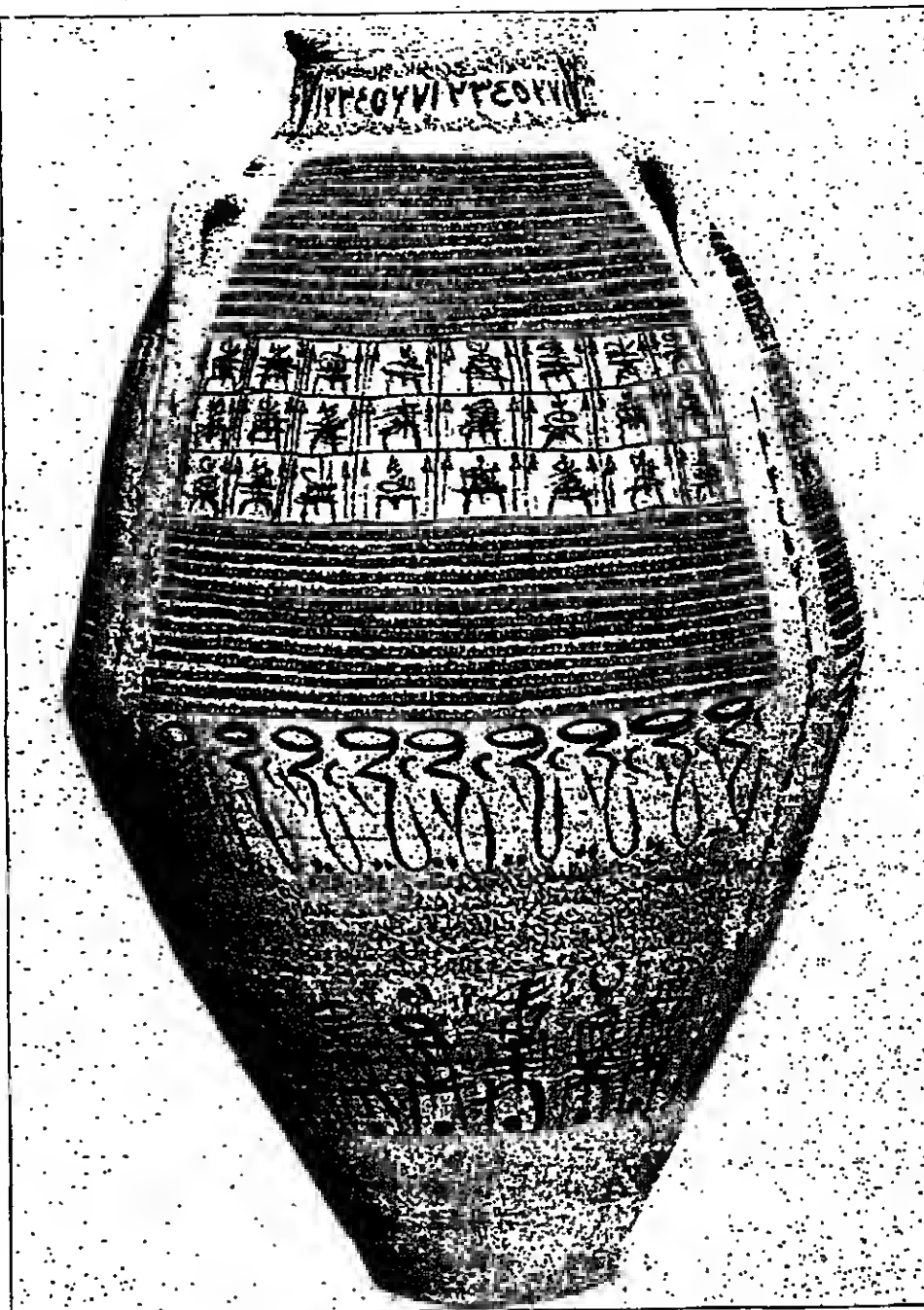
and it is this meditative mood that his works powerfully convey. Situated to the left of the exhibition hall are 21 tablets with Arabic calligraphy. Almost all the letters are in black and white. The artist dwells in the spiritual world with Koranic inscriptions. A giant jar perched on a table at the end of the hall also tells its story through inscriptions as historical figures and black on white lettering combines with red and brown designs.

The lone pottery immediately attracts the visitor's curiosity as soon as he enters the exhibition hall. The pottery attests both to the influence of the ancient Egyptians in the region and also symbolizes the Arab world and its glorious past.

Koraishi's calligraphy remains constant though he frequently changes his medium. His pieces are untitled as, in many respects, they speak for themselves. Although only two out of the 31 exhibits are tapestries, they are the most remarkable, hanging opposite each other at the heart of the exhibition hall with golden inscriptions and classically painted designs and symbols. Other outstanding works resembling ancient Arab maps are represented as full colour discs or rings.

His style is above all accessible and pulls the visitor into an otherwise intimidating and discouraging world. Rashid proves that new life and abundant hope can spring from every situation, however tragic.

Koraishi's "Letters of Clay and Silk" is showing until 28 June, daily except Fridays from 10am-7pm at Dar al Funun, Jabel Al Weibdeh, Amman. ■



THE FAR SIDE

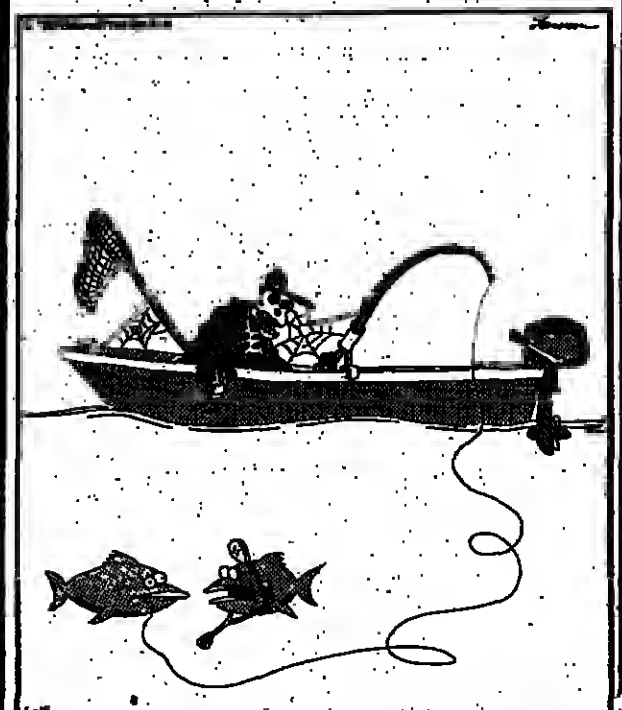
By GARY LARSON



As suddenly as it started, Joe's gagging is alleviated when a small ninja sword is dislodged from his throat.



Zorg duces the entire tribe in an incident later known in prehistory books as "the great".



"Well, first the bad news — you're definitely hooked."

Bargains galore at
ICS car-boot saleBy Natasha Twal
Special to the Star

Cultural events and outdoor activities are constantly taking place around Amman. A "car-boot sale" was one interesting event that took place last Friday at the International Community School (ICS) in Amman.

A "car-boot sale" is another term for a flea market. Car-boot sales have been going for some time, and are especially popular in England. Traditionally, farm owners would allow the public to hold a bargain sale on their land. Participants displayed their products from their open car boot, hence the term "car-boot sale".

A "garage sale" is the equivalent American term for a car-boot sale. The term comes from the popular practice of home owners selling goods to the public from their private garages.

"The main reason for holding this special kind of activity at the ICS—it has been running for the past 8 years or so—is for the foreign communities living in Jordan for a specific period of time," explained Mr Phil Brisley, the headmaster of the school. "Most of the participants are families that leave Jordan eventually when their work contracts finish. This kind of event allows them to clear out their stuff." He added, "Most of the products displayed are of good quality and acceptable price. They are mainly books, children toys and second-hand clothes."

All the income goes to the school's Parent-teachers Association (PTA) to be used for other interesting activities. Anyone can participate in the sale by simply reserving a table to display their products. A few tables were granted free of charge to some participating charity associations such as the Baptist Church and the Irish Ladies of Amman.

Ms Radaa Nour, a participant in the sale, stated



People always enjoy shopping for bargains

ed that this was not the first time she has taken part in such an activity. She takes part in the sale almost every year. Her table display consisted mainly of used books and second-hand clothes.

"It is the first time I have attended such an event in Amman," said Ms Luisa Sebastian, one

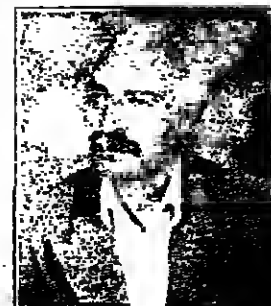
of the people who attended the car-boot sale. I heard about the sale from my daughter who attends the ICS," added Ms Sebastian, who eventually bought two children's books for her daughter. Similar activities regularly take place at the ICS. For example, an International Food Fair will be held at the school in October. ■

Grand photo
competition
organized

The International Road Transport Union (IRU) and the International Committee of the Red Cross are organizing a grand photo competition on humanitarianism, historical and modern road transport. The IRU has chosen the theme "driving together for a better future" to mark its 50th anniversary. Anyone wishing to enter this competition should do so no later than 31 August 1998. For further details contact Mu'in Kassas at the ICRC Delegation, tel 5688645.

Wonders of
art in Irbid

PAINTING IS a very important way of expressing your culture. Mohammed Abu Zureiq's latest exhibition which starts on Friday 19 June promises to convey such an expression. Held in Rowaq Al Hussun in Irbid, the exhibition is a comprehensive view of the works of the painter whose first exhibit dates back in 1974. Since then Abu Zureiq has staged many events. His current works show the dexterity of the artist, as he indulges in water colors as well as graphics. The exhibit ends on 17 July. ■



Abu Zureiq

AGENDA

- Exhibitions**
 - At Darat al Funun (Jabal al Weibdeh), an exhibit of graphic and oil works on paper by Tunisian artist Qaidar Triki, comprising work done between 1973 and 1993, will run until June 26.
 - Also at Darat al Funun, a new collection of Contemporary Arab Art will be on display until June 25.
 - "Letters of Clay and Silk", a homage to Muhideen Ibn Arabi is an exhibition by Algerian artist Rashid Koraishi that opens at Darat al Funun on June 3. It is held in cooperation with the French Cultural Center. After the opening an Algerian Music Concert will be held at the Darat at 8 pm.
 - The Fades Al Hyrraylah (Freedom of Space) exhibition is being displayed at Orpholley Gallery in Um Uthman. The venue, which has exhibits 100 paintings of Jordanian and Arab artists continues till 30 June.
 - An exhibition of the 3rd anniversary for the establishment of the Hamourabi Gallery continues till 30 July. About 200 exhibits are on display, including ceramics and carvings of Jordanian and Arab artists are on display.
 - Atharunah: Waaqah wa Humour (Archaeology: Reality and Concerns) is an exhibition organized by the Antiquities Dept. It runs till 10 July at the Department.
 - "The Salt Collection of pottery, tiles, mosaics, fabrics, linens, tablecloths and more runs till June 25. It is being organized under the patronage of Queen Noor by the Jordan Design and Trade Center and the Noor Al Hussein Foundation. The exhibition is at the Center, off Wadi Sagra Street, between the King Abdallah Gardens and Safeway, 2nd right after gas station.

The Star's Guide

Programs on JTV
from 18 — 25 June

ENGLISH PROGRAMS

SATURDAY

3:00—Holy Koran
3:10—Johnny Quest
3:30—I Wanna Be...
4:00—Neighbors
4:30—Ocean Wilds
5:00—French Program
6:00—Acapulco Bay
7:00—News in French
7:15—Discovery Magazine
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—You Bet Your Life
8:00—Frasier
8:30—Stras
9:30—News At Ten
10:00—World Cup (Netherlands Vs Korea) Live
11:45—Country Music

SUNDAY

3:00—Holy Koran
3:10—The Pumpkin Patch
3:20—The Pink Panther
3:30—Skiing
4:00—The American Chart Show
5:00—In The Wild
6:00—French Program
7:00—News in French
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Life's most Embarrassing Moments
8:00—Challenges
8:30—Renegade
9:30—News At Ten
10:00—World Cup (USA Vs Iran) Live
11:45—The History of Rock & Roll

MONDAY

3:00—Holy Koran
3:10—Highlander
3:30—Raider of the South Pacific
4:00—Neighbors
4:30—Last Frontiers
5:00—French Program
6:00—Acapulco Bay
7:00—News in French



The Health Show, Tuesday at 4:30 pm.

7:15—French Programs
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Hope and Gloria
8:00—Perspective
9:30—News At Ten
10:00—World Cup (Romania Vs England) Live
11:45—Bay Watch Nights

TUESDAY

3:00—Holy Koran
3:10—Pro Star
3:30—Small Talk
4:00—Bordertown

4:30—The Health Show
10:00—World Cup (Chile Vs Cameroon) Live
6:00—French Program
7:00—News in French
7:15—French Programs
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Step by Step
8:00—What would you do
8:30—The Sculptress
9:30—News At Ten
10:00—World Cup (Scotland Vs Morocco) Live
11:45—Feature Film:

Silent Witness

WEDNESDAY

3:00—Holy Koran
3:10—Mr Bogus Show
3:30—The Luck Bogus
4:00—The Album Show
5:00—World Cup (SAfrica Vs S. Arabia) Live
7:00—News in French
7:15—French Programs
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Buddies
8:00—Envoyé Spécial
8:30—Kun-Fu
9:30—News At Ten
10:00—World Cup (Nigeria Vs Paraguay) Live
11:45—The Bite

THURSDAY

3:00—Holy Koran
3:10—Dinky Dis
3:30—The Animal Park
4:00—Daily Summary
4:30—Ocean Wilds
5:00—World Cup (Netherlands Vs Mexico) Live
7:00—News in French
7:15—French Programs
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Family Matters
8:00—The Great Romances
9:30—News At Ten
10:00—World Cup (Romania Vs Tunisia) Live
11:45—Feature Film: Question of Guilt

FRIDAY

3:00—Holy Koran
3:10—Teddy Ruxpin
3:30—Children Film: Back Fire
5:00—World Cup (Argentina Vs Croatia) Live
7:00—News in French
7:15—French Program
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—The Fresh Prince of

Bel Air

8:00—The Footsteps of Alexander The Great
9:00—The Brain
9:30—News at Ten
10:00—World Cup (Romania Vs Tunisia) Live
11:45—The Bite (Mini Series)

PROGRAMMES EN FRANÇAIS

SAMEDI

17:00—Fant pas rêver
19:00—Le Journal
19:15—Magazine L'œuf de Colomb

DIMANCHE

18:00—Bonne espérance
19:00—Le Journal
19:15—E-M6

LUNDI

17:00—Thalassé
19:00—Le Journal
19:15—Cinq sur Cinq

MARDI

18:00—Les cœurs brûlés (8)
19:00—Le Journal
19:15—Fractales

MERCREDI

19:00—Le Journal
19:15—E-M6
20:00—Envoyé spécial

JEUDI

19:00—Le Journal
19:15—Atomes crochus

VENDREDI

19:00—Le Journal
19:15—Allô la Terre

Programs are subject to change by JTV

model



International French

supermodel Laetitia

Casta who will soon

make her debut on the

silver screen in an Aste-

rix adventure, blos-

somed during the last

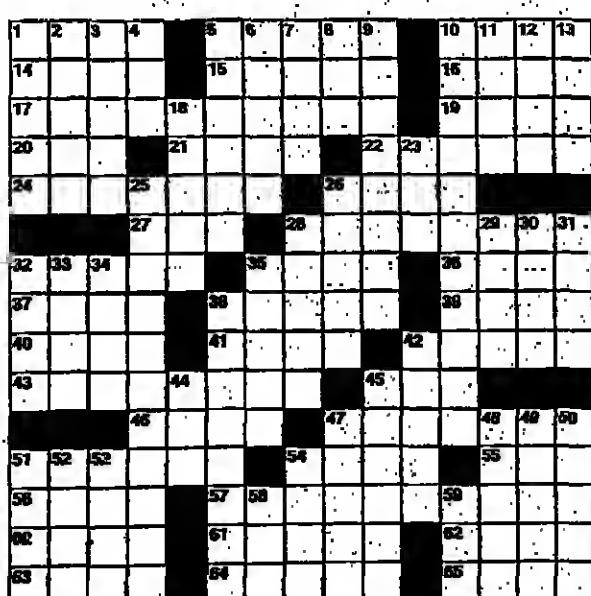
Cannes Film Festival as

the new face of L'Oréal

beauty products.



CROSSWORD PUZZLE



ACROSS
1 Yemen's capital
5 Odds of old
10 Promote successfully
14 Goddess of discord
15 Cordoba liber
18 Kind of bean
17 Parade contest, at times
19 Decade
20 Volcanic fallout
21 Title
22 Exclusively
24 Wobblers
25 Move rapidly and noisily
27 1940 supplier
28 More substantial
32 Confidence games
35 Fiber source
36 Isotonic heavy work

DOWN
1 case (make comfortable)
2 Great day
3 Outright
4 Request
5 Overly
6 Revocatory
7 Amos, prophet
8 Converts into pulp
9 Instant
10 Spill
11 40-day period
12 Barons' spouses
13 Platters
18 Ready follower
25 Conscience
26 Steak cut
28 Like onion
29 Adorned one
30 Adams or McCarty
31 Author Ayn
32 Man-only
33 Singer
34 Sarcasm
35 Sheepish comment
36 Indianapolis

—THIS WEEK'S—
HOROSCOPE

By Linda Black

Weekly Tip: The sun is in Taurus, which is wonderful. Taurus is the sign of gardening and flowers.

Aries (March 21-April 19). It's hard to make the connection with your sweetheart. You may be pleasantly surprised, however.

Taurus (April 20-May 20). Make your decision. Share it with your sweetheart and get busy with plans for your future.

Gemini (May 21-June 21). Continue to clean up your place so you can have company over. These are pretty good times for work, so why not invite someone to help you?

Cancer (June 22-July 22). You could have money coming in, if you contact the right person and let him or her know what you need. Do research with your friends.

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22). Don't try to argue with a boss who knows it all, even if you think you do. These are your best days to ask for money, or to get a raise.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). The headache you woke up with will start to disappear. So will the person who's been nagging you. You're looking very good.

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Submit paperwork that will help you achieve a long-term goal. Squelch a rumor about your work habits by proving you can get the job done on time.

Scorpio (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Ponder a career decision carefully. The work you've done lately is pushing you ahead of all competition.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You could get to travel in connection with a work activity. Take notes. There will be a quiz and detail matters. Neatness counts, too.

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You may have financial difficulties. Don't worry. There's something you can sell that will bring more money in.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You're in for an interesting argument. Don't spend more than you can afford trying to make your point. There are bills to be paid. Don't be disheartened if it leaves you scrimping for cash.

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20). An efficient friend would love to help you improve your work habits. Only accept the offer if this friend can keep from being too critical.

If You're Having a Birthday This Week: Set down a firm foundation first, and your dreams will start materializing. This is your year to fall in love.

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PERKY & BEANZ by Russell Myers



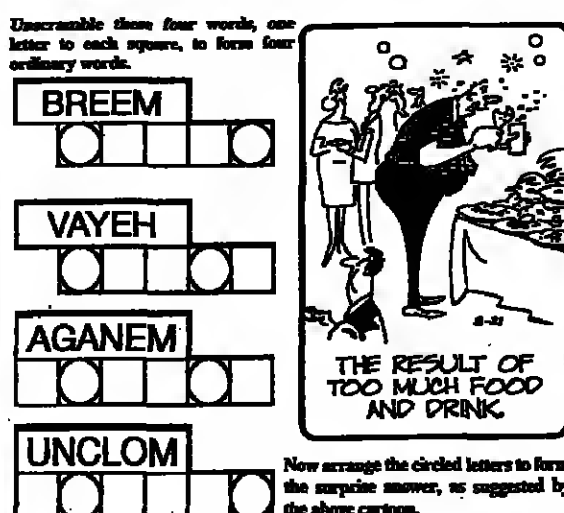
KLWOOD by Ben Templeton & Tom Forman



CATFISH by Fred Wagner & Tom Cone



Jumble



Print answer here: A

Answers: HANG OVER

Answer: The result of too much food and drink

Words of Wisdom

Laws aren't corrupt. It's the interpretation of them that causes them to be so.

Loyalty bought can be loyalty sold.

Strong leaders need even stronger workers.

No one is rich enough to buy back the past.

Always tell the truth, and you'll be one lonely person.

Character is not a gift; it is something that is hard earned.

If you're not ashamed to think it, don't be ashamed to say it.

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CHALLENGE



"I don't understand you, sir! Most people would give their right arm for a chance to go to dance parties for the next 75 years!"

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Le Jourdain

Supplément en français du Star

Et de deux !

Le Jourdain augmente son débit en passant à deux pages. Une gain d'espace qui nous permet de cette édition de vous proposer plus de reportages et de nouvelles rubriques. Une double page qui signifie aussi plus de maturité pour ce jeune supplément en français. Le Jourdain est en train de vivre, avec son grand frère anglais, une petite révolution. À partir de samedi, et effet, le Star passe complètement sous la coupe du quotidien arabe *Al-Dustour*. C'est dans les locaux de ce grand groupe de presse que vous pourrez désormais nous contacter (Tél. : 5664153).

La rédaction du Jourdain quitte donc son lit douillet de Djebel Lweibdeh pour de plus grandes eaux. Ni rames, ni galère, l'aventure s'annonce au contraire passionnante. Alors tout le monde sur le pont !

Le Jourdain

Fumées de la cimenterie qui empoisonnent la vie de Fuhels depuis 30 ans ; désastre écologique du «réservoir de Pepsi» près de Russeifah ; résidus industriels du bassin de Zarqa ou encore produits indésirables des stations de traitement des eaux usées à Kirbet Samra (dans le nord)...

En Jordanie où, comme d'autres pays, nous avons célébré la journée internationale de l'environnement au début de ce mois, nous maîtrisons l'art d'analyser les problèmes et de les résoudre sur le papier. Qui, parmi les responsables, ne connaît pas les horreurs écologiques dont nous venons de citer quelques exemples ? Combien de fois les habitants et les associations de protection de l'environnement de Fuhels, de Russeifah et de Zarqa ont exigé des solutions à ces situations qui menacent leurs vies ? Combien de fois leur a-t-on répondu que tout «allait être bientôt réglé», sans résultats tangibles ?

À ces interrogations légitimes, les responsables gouvernementaux ont une réplique toute diplomatique : «Nous n'avons pas l'argent pour éradiquer ces problèmes». Surgit alors une autre question plus inquiétante : «Où va l'argent que les pays étrangers et les organisations internationales accordent au gouvernement pour protéger l'environnement ?»

Pourtant ministres et médias continuent de louer les efforts officiels dans ce domaine, depuis la création en

Éclaboussures

1983 du «département de l'environnement», rattaché au ministère des affaires municipales et rurales, jusqu'à la fondation récente de l'Établissement général de l'environnement. Il y a eu aussi l'introduction des notions fondamentales sur la protection de l'environnement dans les manuels scolaires. Et en 1995, le Parlement a adopté une loi sur l'environnement. Malheureusement son application s'avère impossible car les règlements attendus n'ont toujours pas été publiés trois ans après.

De plus, l'indolence vis-à-vis des pollueurs dont fait preuve la loi elle-même souligne l'écart qui existe encore entre le discours officiel et les réalisations concrètes. S'attaquer aux dérangements écolo est à portée de main. Encore faut-il que les industriels acceptent quelques sacrifices. Jusqu'à présent on a estimé, gouvernement en tête, que ceux-ci n'étaient pas nécessaires. Le principe «pollueur-payeur» n'est pas encore entré en vigueur chez nous. Certains préfèrent encore se remplir les poches sous prétexte de servir l'économie nationale plutôt que de protéger la nature et la santé de leurs concitoyens.

À quel bon alors demander aux Jordaniens de sauvegarder la nature. N'est-ce pas au gouvernement de donner l'exemple ? Les citoyens devraient-ils s'organiser en lobby des victimes de la pollution ?

Il est temps d'agir. Supprimer le «réservoir de Pepsi» ou démolir la cimenterie aurait certainement plus d'impact sur l'imaginaire collectif que des centaines de discours ou des dizaines de milliers de brochures ou d'affiches.

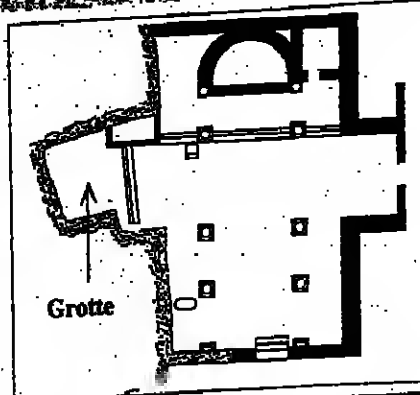
Suleiman Sweiss

Darat al Fumun : à l'origine était la grotte par Véronique Abn-Nijmeh

Avant d'être un lieu ouvert à l'expression artistique, avant même d'être une charmante résidence que fréquenta entre autres Lawrence d'Arabie, Darat al Fumun était un site à caractère sacré. Les vestiges que l'on peut y voir sont ceux d'une église d'époque byzantine dédiée à St Georges. L'une des particularités majeures de cet édifice est d'intégrer dans le bras nord de son transept (voir plan ci-contre) une grotte aménagée en chapelle. Dans les parois de celle-ci sont creusées quatre niches dont l'une d'elles domine une large cavité contenant les restes de ce qui pourrait être un sarcophage. C'est certainement ce qui a incité le premier explorateur, Mayer C. R. Conder (1889) à décrire la grotte comme la tombe d'un saint.

L'église byzantine recouvre un ancien site romain dont elle a réutilisé le matériel, notamment les colonnes et les

chapiteaux corinthiens. En effet une inscription encore visible mentionne un sanctuaire dédié à Héraclès, la même divinité qui siègeait en maître sur la chaudière. Que les églises soient érigées sur d'anciens sanctuaires païens est un fait courant. Notons en revanche la similitude des cultes respectifs, Héraclès et St Georges, tous deux honorés pour le courage dont ils ont fait preuve, le premier dans ses douze travaux mythiques, le second dans son combat contre le dragon. C'est peut-être même la seule explication qui justifie la présence de St Georges à cet endroit. Quant au culte d'Héraclès, nous savons qu'il est l'évolution du culte du dieu ammonite Milkom, datant de l'âge de fer. On peut dès lors supposer, malheureusement sans appui archéologique, que la grotte a abrité, en des temps reculés, un lieu de culte ammonite.



Transport

Le train-train champêtre du lundi matin

Comme l'an passé, le Centre culturel français propose de fêter la musique à bord du train mythique du Hedjaz. Une ligne qui ne fonctionne pas seulement pour les touristes. Chaque lundi, des voyageurs découvrent le plaisir de traverser la campagne jordanienne à 30 km/h.

«Bonjour, je voudrais un aller simple pour Mafrak, s'il vous plaît», demande une femme d'allure étrangère. «Cela fait un demi-dinar, lui répond le vieux guichetier aimable, vous pouvez monter. C'est bientôt l'heure de partir». Une conversation presque surréaliste dans cette gare d'Amman qui le reste de la semaine est pratiquement abandonnée. Lundi, 7h30, c'est au contraire l'effervescence. Le grand jour du seul train de voyageurs de toute la Jordanie. Les passagers s'apprêtent, rassemblent leurs affaires et leurs bambins et en attendant le coup de sifflet de départ calent leurs cartons de nourriture et leur thermos dans les files. Les plus petits et les plus âgés ne cessent de piailler, tandis que le contrôleur passe dans l'allée centrale de chaque voiture pour vérifier les billets.

Huit heures, enfin le départ : le train que l'on disait autrefois du Hedjaz, s'élance vers Damas, la capitale syrienne qu'il mettra huit heures à rejoindre. Dans les cinq wagons, les voyageurs du lundi ont déjà fait : hommes, fouf, et felaïf, les odeurs embaument l'ensemble du convoi. Trois adolescents qui bredouillent un peu d'anglais engagent la conversation avec l'étrangère. «Pardonnez-moi, est-ce que la place est libre ?», lance le plus hardi. Cigarette entre les doigts, lunettes noires, le garçon âgé d'à peine plus de 15 ans, parle comme s'il avait toujours connu cette femme : «C'est la première fois que je monte dans ce train. Cela

change un peu. Je préfère la voiture parce que c'est plus rapide mais je suis en vacances alors j'ai tout le temps pour m'amuser». Après quelques minutes, un employé leur demande de changer de place pour ne pas ennuyer plus longtemps la passagère...

Par la fenêtre sale, on aperçoit de vieilles maisons construites avec des bouts de tôles, des îlots perdus dans ce désert de cactus, de chèvres et de gens qui saluent ce convoi hebdomadaire et champêtre.

Le soleil est déjà haut dans le ciel et la température en constante révèle une forte odeur de sueur dans la fournaise rouillante. Sur les parois jaunes pisseuses des wagons, des graffitis en arabe. Les sièges en faux cuir sont couverts de poussière et sur le sol taché, quelques résidus alimentaires.

L'étrangère se décide à entreprendre une petite visite plus approfondie de ces lieux mais une jeune femme l'arrête et d'un sourire lui explique qu'elle prend le train pour la deuxième fois et qu'elle ne peut voyager seule : «Je dois attendre quelqu'un, mon mari dit qu'il va venir faire un voyage comme celui-ci. Je préfère le train parce que c'est



Arrêt à Mafrak. Le train est déserté pour le pique-nique familial.

Zarqa, 9h. Beaucoup de gens montent pour se rendre à Mafrak. Maintenant, les wagons sont pleins. À peine assis, les nouveaux voyageurs, comme leurs devanciers, ouvrent leur garde-manger. Une vieille dame apprend à l'étrangère qu'elle aussi va à Mafrak : «Pour un pique-nique, précise-t-elle toute heureuse, je prends le train chaque fois que j'en ai l'opportunité. C'est lent mais c'est plus sûr. Je suis même allée jusqu'à Damas avec ce train et cela s'est très bien passé». Enfin à 10h30, la traction-essence pousse la locomotive, à vapeur de l'époque, toute restaurée, aux sons tonitruants, arrive en gare de Mafrak. L'étrangère salue une dernière fois ses compagnons de voyage

qui se précipitent en contre-bas de la voie ferrée pour préparer leur pique-nique familial à l'ombre des oliviers de la gare. Un homme prend ses enfants en photo devant l'un des wagons. La plupart ont terminé leur pique-nique. Seuls quelques originaux poursuivent jusqu'en Syrie. Le charme désuet du petit train est toujours aussi actif. Chaque année, ils sont 30.000 à embarquer.

Aminah Ishtay

La fête de la musique à bord du train du Hedjaz, vendredi 19 juin. Départ à 16h à la gare de Mahatta à Amman. Renseignements auprès du CCF au 4637009 ou 4636445.

Peinture

Droits de l'Homme grandeur nature

La fresque murale de Paul De Gobert est inaugurée cette semaine. Dans les jardins de la municipalité d'Amman, l'œuvre géante célèbre la déclaration universelle des Droits de l'Homme et la rencontre des cultures.

Si vous marchez dans Ras-al-Ain, vous ne pouvez pas loucher de voir de vingt mètres de long pour quatre mètres de haut, intégré au tout nouveau complexe de la municipalité du Grand Amman. Devant ce mur, un homme d'une cinquantaine d'années, casquette et lunettes de soleil, les vêtements souillés de couleurs, le pinceau à la main. C'est Paul De Gobert, artiste-peintre belge. Il y a dix ans, il peignait les murs d'une maison à Bruxelles. Sa vocation était née. Le mur sera son support. Il a aujourd'hui une œuvre gigantesque derrière lui : d'une station de métro dans la capitale belge, du siège d'une grande banque parisienne jusqu'au restaurant des Joueurs de Roland-Garros, à Amman, où les contraires vivent ensemble.

«L'artiste en bâtiment vient d'achever après un mois de travail son hommage à la Déclaration universelle des Droits de l'Homme. Un texte essentiel qui a 50 ans cette année et dont le premier article - «Tous les êtres humains naissent libres et égaux en dignité et en droits...» - est calligraphié en arabe, en français et en anglais au verso du mur.

Le Jourdain : Quel est précisément l'objet de votre travail ?

Paul De Gobert : Je peins une fresque murale qui mêle deux paysages. L'un est un paysage français, la côte de Normandie et l'autre est un paysage jordanien pur et sans touche humaine, le désert du Wadi Rum.

Cette fresque, que j'ai appelée «Paysage-mélanges», est composée de trente fenêtres qui font référence aux trente articles de la déclaration universelle des Droits de l'Homme adoptée le 10 décembre 1948 par l'Assemblée générale des Nations unies. Ces trente articles d'égale importance, forment un ensemble, une trame de vie sociale, politique, économique, culturelle, qui a inspiré la Déclaration. Cela m'a incité à avoir une réflexion personnelle et un regard particulier sur le monde.

Le Jourdain : Effectivement la nature est au centre de votre œuvre ? Que signifie-t-elle pour vous ?

P. D. G. : La nature et les paysages sont indispensables à l'homme. Cela fait partie de sa culture. Nous parlons de l'homme en parlant des paysages où il vit. Si l'on ne protège pas notre environnement, on ne protège pas notre culture. Utiliser ainsi la nature, c'est une façon de décrire un dialogue plus large.

Le Jourdain : Pourquoi avoir choisi ce mélange entre un paysage occidental et un paysage oriental ?

P. D. G. : Je veux créer une double vision de deux paysages qui se rencontrent, se complètent, s'harmonisent. Cela signifie aussi la rencontre des hommes, des langues française et arabe, des cultures occidentale et orientale, dans une trame humanitaire.

Le Jourdain : Quelles techniques avez-vous adoptées pour peindre cette fresque ?

P. D. G. : Mon travail s'est déroulé en plusieurs étapes. D'abord j'analyse l'état du mur et en fonction de cela, j'envisage l'approche technique la plus appropriée et je choisis les peintures et les couleurs. Ensuite les grandes lignes de l'esquisse sur le papier sont reportées au fusain sur le mur. Le peintre prend alors progressivement possession de l'espace et l'affronte physiquement en montant et descendant les échelles pour prendre du recul.

Le dessin se modifie peu à peu. La lumière et l'environnement entrent en jeu lorsque les premiers aplats de couleur apparaissent.

Le Jourdain : Avez-vous rencontré des difficultés au cours de votre travail ?

P. D. G. : À cause du soleil, je n'ai peint que le matin et le soir. J'arrêtais le midi parce que la lumière du midi était trop forte. Et puis c'est aussi un effort physique énorme pour le peintre.

Propos recueillis par

Fatin Mansi

Le mot de la semaine : SPORT

À l'heure où le sport est devenu l'apanage de professionnels acharnés, se souvient-on encore de son fondement ludique ? Sa spécificité de délasserment nous est rappelée par son étymologie : apparu au XIX^{ème} siècle dans la société anglaise, sport vient de l'anglais *disport*, le divertissement. Mais comme la grande majorité des termes anglais formés à l'aide du préfixe *dis-*, *disport* est issu de l'ancien français (*desporter* qui signifiait au XIII^{ème} siècle *se divertir* (se) réjouir, en d'autres termes, porter son esprit loin des occupations astreignantes. Toutefois, ce caractère distrayant du sport n'implique en

aucune manière un manque de rigueur et d'efforts. Au contraire, l'ensemble des règles strictes qui constituent, dans ce domaine particulier, le cadre des principes sociaux, permet à l'homme de dégager des énergies nouvelles sollicitées dans le quotidien. L'éthique sportive fondée sur l'observation des règles, la droiture et le respect de l'adversaire, porte son influence sur le sens des dérivés français du mot sport, leur conférant une connotation sociale. Ainsi *sportif* signifie aussi loyal, sportivité, loyauté.

Véronique Abn-Nijmeh

Coupe du monde

La poisse sur les Princes du désert

Qualifiés d'équipe «sans pétrole», les Saoudiens, aussi malchanceux sur le terrain qu'en dehors, ont mal commencé leur Mondial. Ils ont l'occasion ce soir de se relancer contre les Bleus, l'équipe du pays organisateur.



Les prières seront-elles suffisantes pour exorciser la malchance saoudienne ? Réponse ce soir contre la France.

Parmi les 31 nations engagées dans le Mondial 98, l'Arabie Saoudite fait partie de celles qui passent le plus inaperçu en France. Ne possédant que quelques supporters saoudiens dans les loges luxueuses des stades, elle ne pouvait pas s'attendre en arrivant dans l'Hexagone à obtenir les faveurs du public local pour deux raisons : l'Arabie saoudite est une équipe inconnue du grand public, aucun joueur saoudien n'étant autorisé à évoluer dans des championnats étrangers, et surtout elle est tombée dans le groupe qualitatif des Français.

Révélation du dernier Mondial aux États-Unis, l'Arabie Saoudite avait réussi l'exploit de se hisser en huitième de finale, s'inclinant contre la Suède qui terminait à la troisième place de la compétition. Après un long raid dans la défense belge, le but de Saad al-Oweiran avait alors été l'un des plus beaux du Mondial 1994.

Depuis cette première apparition magistrale dans une phase finale de Coupe du monde, les Saoudiens n'ont eu que peu l'occasion de regagner à la compétition de haut niveau. Et face aux grandes nations du football, l'Arabie Saoudite s'est montrée assez décevante en décembre dernier lors de la Coupe des Confédérations organisée chez elle, ne s'imposant que face à l'Australie.

Elle a depuis bénéficié des services de l'entraîneur brésilien Carlos Alberto Parreira, entraîneur du Brésil en 1994 lors de sa dernière victoire en Coupe du monde. Monnayée à prix d'or, l'arrivée en décembre de cet entraîneur globe-trotter, qui participe à sa qua-

trième Coupe du monde aux commandes d'une sélection nationale différente, semble avoir remis l'équipe saoudienne en selle. Sélectionneur par le passé du Koweït et des Émirats Arabes Unis, Parreira s'est bien adapté au groupe saoudien, qui compte toujours ses vedettes de 1994. Et le nul 0-0 obtenu en match de préparation contre l'Angleterre avait placé l'équipe dans les meilleures conditions à la veille de la compétition.

Pourtant, les débuts saoudiens n'ont pas été à la hauteur du souvenir de 1994. S'inclinant 1 à 0 contre le Danemark, cette fois, elle n'a pas réussi à créer la surprise. Beaucoup trop statique sur le terrain, elle ne s'est contentée que de défendre, profitant une fois de plus des talents de son gardien Mohammed al-Deayea. Après la rencontre, Carlos Parreira estimait que ses joueurs avaient été «courageux» mais qu'ils avaient commis beaucoup trop d'erreurs pour pouvoir inquiéter des Danois, par ailleurs assez décevants.

Après une semaine de compétition, le bilan des Saoudiens n'est donc pas des plus positifs. L'équipe a du mal à émerger, ne serait-ce que dans les médias français. Dans un supplément littéraire consacré aux 32 équipes, le quotidien *Libération* a ainsi fait appel à un écrivain déchu de sa nationalité saoudienne, Abdul Rahman Mounif, auteur en 1996 de *Une ville dans la mémoire*, Amman.

Mais les Saoudiens pourraient bien revenir ce soir à la une de l'actualité s'ils battent la France. La tâche s'annonce rude pour ceux que l'on surnomme «les Brésiliens ou les Princes du désert». Il leur faut de toute façon réaliser un bon résultat contre les Français pour espérer renouveler leur performance de 1994, et confirmer leur place au sein de l'élite du football mondial.

Vol à l'hôtel

Faute d'être maîtres sur le terrain et dans les tribunes - un de leurs supporters isolé au milieu de Danois stentors essayait vain de donner de la voix à l'aide d'un mégaphone - les Saoudiens se sont illustrés en dehors du stade. Au moment même où les joueurs étaient sur la pelouse du stade Felix-Bolbert, leurs chambres d'hôtel étaient cambriolées. En rentrant, ils ont eu la mauvaise surprise de constater que des bijoux et des effets personnels leur avaient été volés, et notamment des tapis de prière. Une nouvelle qui n'a pro-

bablement pas remonté le moral des troupes du royaume saoudien après leur défaite.

Un ressortissant saoudien a tout de même réussi à faire parler de lui. Vendredi dernier, lors de la rencontre Paraguay-Bulgarie, l'arbitre Abdul Rahman al-Zaid a sorti le premier carton rouge du Mondial pour sanctionner un tacle assassin du Bulgare Anatoli Nankov. Une sévérité arbitrale un peu tardive aux yeux de nombreux observateurs puisque Abdul Rahman al-Zaid n'a exclu le Bulgare qu'à la 89^{ème} minute d'une rencontre marquée par des gestes très violents et déjà émaillée de quatre cartons jaunes.

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Notre correspondant à Paris, Olivier Bras

C'est

L'agenda français

Cinéma

Cycle consacré à la réalisatrice Agnès Varda. Les créations, film de 1966 en couleur, sous-titrés en arabe avec Catherine Denève, Michel Piccoli. À la suite d'un accident de voiture, la femme d'un écrivain perd l'usage de la parole. Lundi 22 juin au Centre culturel français à 18h30 et 20h30. Renseignements au CCF au 4636445 ou 4637009.

Exposition

En 1995, l'artiste algérien Rachid Koraichi travaille sur des jarres d'argile avec des potiers tunisiens. Mais elles sont détruites un jour de violence orage. Deux ans plus tard, le peintre a repris ce projet en France avec l'aide notamment des potiers d'Anduze et de Saint-Quentin la Poterie. C'est une partie de cette production (7 vases d'Anduze, 14 jarres à olives, ainsi que 7 voiles de soie) qui est présentée au Centre culturel français et à Darat al Fumun jusqu'au 2 juillet.

D'un cours à l'autre

Enquête

Sur le chemin de croix de la toxicomanie

Le tabou de la drogue est sans doute plus fort ici. Les drogués considérés davantage comme des « pervers ». Mais du premier flash jusqu'à la cure de désintoxication, c'est le même « Ascenseur pour l'enfer » (1) qu'ailleurs.

signants en cas de sevrage brusque.

Pourquoi devient-on toxicomane ?

« Je rentrais de l'école et comme d'habitude je ne trouvais personne à la maison : ma mère travaillait comme coiffeuse, mon père était dans son bureau toute la journée. Alors je sortais avec les copains, on a commencé avec les cigarettes puis l'alcool et enfin les tranquillisants », se souvient Ziyad, un jeune toxicomane qu'on aperçoit souvent devant la pharmacie du quartier. Mais un père autoritaire n'est pas meilleur que des parents négligents. Alham raconte ainsi le malheur de son frère aîné : « Mon père est très sévère, Nasser n'osait pas sortir avec ses copains. Il a retrouvé sa liberté quand il a obtenu une bourse pour étudier au Maroc. Là-bas, il est devenu héroïnomane et nous est revenu sans diplôme en plus ».

Chez les adolescents, l'usage de drogue peut être la manifesta-

tion d'un refus, d'une contestation ou bien une imitation de ce qu'ils voient à la télé ou un défi aux copains sur le mode « fume ce joint, si t'es un homme ».

Cependant, la toxicomanie est aussi le reflet de troubles psychologiques profonds chez des personnes les plus fragiles. À l'exemple de Fahd, héroïnomane aujourd'hui de 25 ans. « Cela me choque. Pourquoi lui ? Ses dix frères et ses trois sœurs sont diplômés, respectés par tout le monde. Pourquoi lui ? Je ne comprends pas », s'interroge sa mère. La demande fréquente et injustifiée d'argent, les produits bizarres à la maison, les retards scolaires peuvent être des signes de l'usage de drogues par l'adolescent.

En revanche, les raisons qui poussent un adulte à la toxicomanie sont différentes. Certains y trouvent un échappatoire : « La voiture les a écrasés, mes parents sont morts devant mes yeux, je ne trouve l'oubli que dans les drogues », témoigne Hamad, un héroïnomane. Parfois c'est simplement la curiosité surtout quand le dealer fait bien valoir sa marchandise. « Il travaillait dans ma ferme, il m'a dit : « c'est autre chose que le haschich, c'est un autre monde ». Le premier joint était gratuit, le deuxième aussi puis le piège s'est refermé, je devais payer », confie Samer un héroïnomane de 35 ans.

Dans quelques cas, les problèmes d'intégration sociale poussent à la consommation. Le haschich permet ainsi de faire tomber les barrières entre les gens. « Le « squat » est divisé en cinq groupes, détaille un toxicomane, chaque groupe comporte six personnes avec un



serviteur. Un fume du haschich et un dit tout. Ces six-là sont devenus mes meilleurs amis. Un véritable ami c'est celui avec qui on fume du haschich ».

La mauvaise utilisation de certains médicaments (neuroleptiques, tranquillisants) et antidépresseurs peut être également à l'origine de la toxicomanie. « Il y a un an, j'ai saigné un pilote de ligne, cite en exemple le docteur Habachna. En raison des nombreux décalages horaires mal supportés, il avait besoin d'utiliser un somnifère mais avec le temps, il ne pouvait plus s'en passer ».

Le regard de la société sur la toxicomanie

Dans la société jordanienne, le toxicomane est la plupart du temps considéré comme un pervers. « Je n'arrive pas à marier mes filles à cause de la mauvaise réputation de leur frère toxicomane », se lamente une mère. Le drogué est généralement considéré du regard de la société et de la famille : « Je fu-

commerce », confie une mère éplorée. Son fils est en prison depuis deux ans à la suite de l'attaque d'une pharmacie pour se procurer des tranquillisants. « Lors de ma dernière visite, il m'a juré qu'il serait comme il faut ».

C'est enfin la famille qui pousse le drogué à se soigner : « Nous on l'héroïne », Docteur Habachna confirme qu'il y a beaucoup de toxicomanes qui viennent se soigner pour satisfaire leurs familles, ils ne sont pas vraiment convaincus ».

Comment mettre fin à cette galère ?

Renoncer à une drogue est une question de volonté mais pas seulement. Le traitement de la toxicomanie comporte deux phases. Tout d'abord le sevrage, une période de dix jours à trois semaines nécessaire pour se débarrasser de la dépendance physique et qui est accompagnée de douleurs, de convulsions ou d'hallucinations.

Ensuite, il faut soigner la dépendance psychique, de loin la phase la plus difficile. « Le toxicomane aspire ouvertement à la liberté et secrètement encore à la drogue », souligne Mouhammad Habachna.

La thérapie de groupe est utilisée dans l'hôpital Al-Rashid. Des toxicos se réunissent pour discuter de leur situation, de leur manière de vaincre le mal. Pour sa part, Samer l'ancien héroïnomane doute de l'efficacité de ce traitement : « Tous les toxicomanes parlent de leur passé (comment se procurer les drogues etc.), un passé qu'un toxicomane sevré préfère oublier ».

Les cures de désintoxication comportent en effet des échecs,

pire encore des récidives. « Rien ne dérange plus un médecin que de revoir à l'hôpital un toxicomane qu'on a déjà soigné », indique le docteur Habachna. Les anciens compagnons de drogue sont les pires ennemis d'un sujet sevré...

« Un tourbillon », ainsi Samer décrit son passé d'accro à l'héroïne. Ce qui ne l'empêche pas de regretter « la paix intérieure » du haschich. Son médecin, à côté de lui, l'interrompt en colère : « Tu es en train de faire la cour au haschich. Tu veux y revenir ? ».

Tahrir Salah

(1) Cette expression désigne, dans le jargon des toxicomanes, un papier plié d'une certaine façon et utilisé pour renifler la fumée de l'héroïne brûlée.

Que dit la loi ?

Selon l'article 14 du code pénal, tout individu qui importe, achète, produit une drogue pour la consommer ou bien qui cultive certaines plantes illicites pour en faire le commerce, subit une de ces deux sanctions :

- une peine de prison, de six mois à deux ans
- une amende de 2000 à 3000 dinars.

Le tribunal a la liberté de substituer ces sanctions par le traitement du drogué dans un hôpital spécialisé. Ce traitement doit se dérouler confidentiellement.

Enfin, quand le prévenu décide de lui-même de se soigner, il n'y a pas, de poursuites pénales.

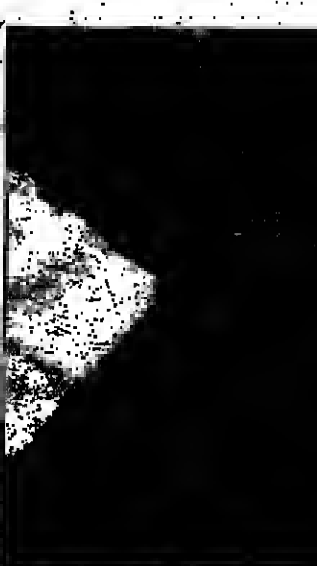
Le « flash »

cette sensation brutale et éphémère, physique et psychique, cette chaleur qui monte du corps à la tête, ce bonheur immense, cette transformation subjective et explosive de soi. Parmi les différentes drogues, c'est l'héroïne qui donnerait le flash le plus intense. Cette première phase est suivie d'un ensemble de sensations qui changent selon la substance consommée.

Dans l'ivresse du haschich, cela se traduit par une hypersensibilité anormale, une acuité accrue dans la perception du moindre bruit. Les sons les plus feutrés ont alors une résonance extraordinaire et les notions de temps et d'espace sont déformées. Le sujet vit dans un monde fantastique et s'imaginer des scènes innombrables dans un déroulement sans fin alors que la pendule n'a pas avancé d'une minute. Une indicible sensation d'extase fait suite aux tumultes d'idées et des images. Après quelques heures, le sujet s'endort et se réveille au matin un peu étonné.

En revanche, le cocaïnisme est bavard, loquace, il éprouve un intense besoin de mouvement, de vitesse. « Personne ne raconte une histoire drôle comme le fait un toxicomane », commente Mouhammad Habachna, un médecin spécialisé dans le traitement de la toxicomanie à l'hôpital privé Al-Rashid près d'Amman. Ce dynamisme ne dure qu'un moment, après quoi l'individu tombe dans une somnolence. De nombreuses erreurs de po-

ception et de jugement apparaissent, les tableaux de la chambre s'animent, les contours des meubles se déforment. Cette illusion de paix, de calme ou de force que le toxicomane connaît est très éphémère. « Le sujet ne cherche plus qu'à se procurer de la drogue. Un héroïnomane, par exemple, est en manque toutes les quatre heures », explique le médecin. Cette appétence devient une habitude tyrannique qui entraîne l'augmentation des doses. L'organisme s'habitue et cela se traduit par un état de besoin impérieux et par des accidents plus ou moins impres-



En France, le cannabis est la drogue la plus consommée. En Jordanie, ce sont les toxicomanies médicamenteuses les plus répandues.

Portrait

L'ogresse du 7ème art

Darina Al-Joundi, touche-à-tout du cinéma, femme libérée et moderne du Liban de l'après-guerre. Invitée du dernier festival du film franco-arabe à Amman, elle nous raconte la passion dévorante de son métier.

« Je me suis toujours imaginée au cinéma car je vois la vie en images, je crée des scénarios en permanence dans ma tête et je... ». Si le téléphone n'existait pas pour interrompre une agréable conversation, en terrasse sous le soleil déclinant d'Amman, Darina Al-Joundi serait totalement absorbée par son art.

Peut-être parce que cette brune libanaise avec 14 films n'est pas seulement actrice mais aussi directrice artistique, monteuse, scripte ou assistante (de Régis Wargnier dans une femme française) et parfois tout à la fois. « J'ai besoin de maîtriser la technique car cela facilite le travail de comédienne et je ne fais pas souffrir mon équipe ». Précision presque inutile, on a en effet du mal à l'imaginer en horrible mégère. Darina est en tout cas une houlmienne, une contaminée de l'art, élevée dans un bouillon de culture avec un oncle cinéaste qu'elle suivait enfant sur ses tournages, un père traducteur

littéraire et deux sœurs peintre et réalisatrice. « Quand j'étais petite, confesse-t-elle dans un français parfait et au débit soutenu, je faisais déjà des spectacles (payants !) sous une tente dans mon village. Ensuite j'ai joué dans des séries télé et au théâtre ». Privée de son milieu, elle décide pendant quelques temps d'abandonner la seconde partie de son nom trop connu au Liban - je voulais me prouver que je pouvais réussir sans lui - et à 20 ans, elle décroche son premier grand rôle. Le film, A la recherche de Leila, du réalisateur irakien Kassem Hawat, s'attaque violemment à la condition de la femme. Le long métrage ne verra jamais le jour. « Pendant un an et demi, nous avons voyagé dans onze pays du monde arabe à la recherche d'une femme qui soit en avance sur son temps, qui n'ait pas honte d'aimer. Mais nous n'avons trouvé que des femmes brisées », se souvient Darina qui, dans le film, prêtait son corps aux voix des femmes. En réalité, on se rend compte

que Leila, c'est un peu elle. Libérée, militante, passionnée, moderniste Al-Joundi, chemisier noir évasé, est une femme moderne : « J'ai eu la chance de recevoir une éducation très libérale. Quand j'avais dix ans, mon père m'a expliqué la vie amoureuse et sexuelle d'une femme et m'a appris à ne pas me sentir coupable de mon corps ». A 30 ans, divorcée déjà trois fois, elle a décidé de mettre le mariage de côté, incompatible selon elle avec le métier égoïste qu'elle a choisi.

Cinéma en chantier

En tant qu'actrice, Darina n'a tourné que quatre films seulement dont il est temps (1994). Elle y joue le rôle de Raya, une Libanaise bourgeoise réfugiée en France qui retourne dans son pays après treize ans d'absence, pour exercer son passé. « Je n'aimais pas ce film jusqu'à la dernière projection à Amman : je le trouvais compliqué, peut-être parce que c'est le premier film de l'après-guerre ». Trop compliqué en comparaison de la vie qu'elle a menée pendant



« Je n'aimais pas ce film jusqu'à sa dernière projection à Amman ». Darina Al-Joundi à propos de Il est temps diffusé pendant le festival franco-arabe.

ces années qu'on supposerait difficiles : « J'ai vécu les plus beaux moments de ma vie pendant la guerre, tranchée-t-elle, elle m'a appris à être une comédienne car au vu l'instant, spontanément, on ne calcule plus. Je n'ai jamais autant travaillé que pendant la guerre car nous devions montrer notre volonté de vivre. J'ai joué huit pièces de théâtre pendant cette période, une seule depuis. On mettait un an pour faire un film, à présent on en fait trois, regrette-t-elle sans provocation.

Comme l'ensemble du pays, le cinéma du Liban est aujourd'hui en reconstruction : « Il y a des cinéastes mais pas de cinéma. Toute la production est assurée par la France. Il faut créer une industrie ». Une industrie dont la pépite Darina pourrait être l'un des piliers en tant que réalisatrice... « Oui, mais pas avant dix ans. Je dois d'abord devenir la meilleure actrice du monde ».

Abn Faber

Les Jordaniens derrière leur écran Gueules d'enterrement à l'Inter-Con.

Hôtel chic Inter-Continental à Amman. À la table Arabie Saoudite-Danemark. L'ambiance est tendue, réservée et lointaine en même temps. Tout au fond de la grande terrasse, entourée de palmiers et qui vient d'être inaugurée pour l'été, plusieurs tables et des chaises en noir et blanc attendent une centaine de passionnés du ballon rond. Les responsables de l'hôtel ont aussi installé une tente avec quantité de coussins en guise de fauteuils. Un endroit pour se sentir comme chez soi. Mais, apparemment, le confort n'est pas du goût des clients du moment : la tente est restée vide pendant tout le match.

Il est à peine 18h30, et sous la brise fraîche du soir, une dizaine d'hommes, qui ont l'air de s'ennuyer, sont déjà allés à l'extérieur se chauffer sur les 16 écrans de l'hôtel, regroupés pour former un grand mur d'images plus attractif.

Quelques-uns sont venus avec leurs petites amies, un peu trop bien habillées pour l'occasion. D'autres se débattaient de trouver une place pour ne pas rater les débuts des Saoudiens dans la Coupe du monde. À voir les Jordaniens soutenir leurs compatriotes d'Arabie, on a l'impression que les Arabes, grâce au foot, vont retrouver leur honneur perdu dans les nombreuses défaites politiques et militaires.

Dans une ambiance échauffée à l'équipe saoudienne, la mi-temps qui échauffe le Danemark se fait timide. Le score reste vierge. Les visages sont tendus. Sur les tables, on remplace le café par une bière pour essayer de se calmer. Cigarettes et narguilles fument à tout va.

Quelques cris, de rares applaudissements. En général, une chape de plomb écrase cet espace, qui devrait être voué à l'excitation. Seules palpitations, les sonneries des portables qu'on n'a pas oubliées pour ne pas passer à côté de la vie sociale.

Vers 19h30, l'entraîneur but pour le Danemark. Bide dans le public de l'Inter-Con. Les visages sont plus fermés que jamais, presque sans expression. Les rares cris et rires des enfants épicent un peu un match sans intérêt et une atmosphère morne. Quelques gamins courent en regardant les

visages cristallisés en direction du grand écran. Les plus petits boivent du lait et les mères, toutes très bien coiffées, passent leur temps à bavarder pendant que leurs maris s'endorment devant le match.

Hasham Mubashir, le souriant serveur qui s'occupe pas de servir d'une table à l'autre, explique que la majorité des spectateurs sont venus spécialement pour le match et que peu d'entre eux sont des passionnés de l'hôtel. « Il y a environ 80 personnes aujourd'hui : c'est notre meilleur chiffre jusqu'à présent parce que l'Arabie Saoudite joue », ajoute-t-il en montrant des dizaines de petits papiers sur lesquels les clients ont inscrit leur favori avant le début de la rencontre : un plébiscite pour les Saoudiens.

Porte de la Palestine ?

Rana Mubashir qui s'en fout du foot, est tout de même venue avec quelques copines histoire de prendre un café, surtout, et peut-être jeter un coup d'œil sur le score : « On voulait sortir et on a pensé que la terrasse de l'Inter-Continental était un bon endroit. Quand au football, cela ne m'intéresse pas trop, je n'ai presque rien vu du match ». Rana Naber, en revanche, est une véritable fan et malgré la conversation permanente de ses amies, tente de suivre le match. « Je suis venue ici spécialement pour le foot sur un grand écran parce que cela donne plus d'ambiance », explique-t-elle.

Question ambiance, malheureusement, ce n'est pas vraiment ça. Au coup de sifflet final, l'Arabie Saoudite a perdu, sur la terrasse de l'Inter-Con, c'est la fin du monde, la perte de la Palestine ou une nouvelle Guerre du Golfe. Bourgeois tristesse et déception ! « Je suis arabe et je voulais qu'un pays arabe gagne pour qu'il ait une bonne position dans le Mondial », admet Quasi Ahmad sans cacher son désarroi.

Avec des gueules d'enterrement, les clients commencent à quitter leur « stade » cinq étoiles. Question : les téléscripteurs de Basse-Ville sont-ils aussi moroses ?

Samam Abu Sharar

Retrouvez la rubrique de Samam Abu Sharar, chaque semaine dans votre journal, pendant toute la durée du Mondial.

critique

La femme d'à côté, un film de François Truffaut (1981), non sous-titré en arabe. En prêt au Centre culturel français.



Pour l'amour fou de Mathilde et Bernard

La femme d'à côté parle de l'amour ramené d'un jeune couple, un homme et une femme qui se sont aimés dans le passé et se retrouvent. Mélange d'innocence et de culpabilité, le film de François Truffaut nous offre un échantillon de vie qui se nourrit de contradictions. Face à face, Bernard (Gérard Depardieu) et Mathilde (Fanny Ardant), deux personnages complexes peints par le génie cinématographique du réalisateur. Bernard, un homme apparemment simple mais compliqué et son miroir, Mathilde, une femme au caractère difficile mais qui se révèle plus limpide. Bernard montre tout d'abord un caractère équilibré. Il ne cherche que le bonheur de sa famille. Plus tard, on découvre pourtant sa violence : pris d'une jalousie farouche, il se met à battre Mathilde.

Quant à elle, ses réactions sont plus spontanées. Sensible et généreuse à l'égard de Bernard et de son mari, elle comprend la fragilité

humaine. Mais elle se défie d'elle-même et semble incapable de forger son indépendance malgré son aplomb. Ainsi elle recherche la sécurité de son mari lorsqu'elle lui demande s'il la protégera. Le réalisateur joue ainsi sur l'indécision. Entre Bernard et Mathilde, le spectateur refuse de choisir, de donner raison à l'un ou à l'autre. Truffaut nous propose d'aimer ces deux personnages comme lui a dû les aimer. À cet égard, Mathilde représente une sorte d'équilibre fragile entre la raison et l'amour. Elle n'est pas une mauvaise femme mais plutôt une femme fautive malgré elle : ses regards mystérieux dévoilent aussi bien l'amour, l'innocence ou la culpabilité.

Comme dans la plupart des œuvres de Truffaut, c'est autour de la femme que tourne l'ensemble du film. Il y a d'abord la narration de Mme Jouve qui joue le rôle de confidente auprès des spectateurs. Elle nous invite à nous identifier à l'histoire ou aux personnages. En même temps, c'est elle qui apporte le recul indispensable pour comprendre que vingt ans après, l'amour des amants a été excessif. Et elle est comme le club de tennis dont elle s'occupe : un croisement, tout passe par elle.

La femme encore, avec Mathilde, qui inspire dès le début le déroulement de l'intrigue et dont le visage de plus en plus émouvant traverse toute l'histoire. Jusqu'à la scène finale (notre photo), scène choquante s'il en est. L'héroïne referme ainsi tragiquement l'histoire de ce couple déchirant. Sur ses lèvres, un sourire. Soulagement triomphant après avoir tant souffert ou omettrons du désespoir ? Un doute que Truffaut prend soin de ne pas lever. ■

Arine Mango

The Star Stadium

Edited by AbdulHamid Adajani

Star of the week

Baggio comes through this time

PARIS — This time, Roberto Baggio didn't miss. Baggio, the man whose failed penalty kick handed the World Cup title to Brazil four years ago, scored from one with six minutes remaining, giving Italy a 2-1 tie with Chile on Thursday. His success averted a major upset in the opener of Group B. "What happened four years ago doesn't count right now," said Italy's coach, Cesare Maldini. "I was pleased with the team's reaction and its thirst for a goal."

The 31-year-old striker, recalled to the Italian lineup after playing only one national team game in three years, calmly sent the ball past goalkeeper Nelson Tapia after Ronald Fuentes' right arm couldn't get out of the way of Baggio's pass into the penalty area.

Until then, Chile was poised for one of its biggest victories on the strength of two goals by Marcelo Salas. Italy's other goal, by Christian Vieri, was set up by Baggio with a sideways pass.



Mondial fashion

Chips to Samba, fans go to any length to identify with teams



Belgian fans

PARIS — Belgian fans were eating chips outside the Stade de France while a group of orange clad Dutchmen surveyed a nearby canal with expert eyes. Neighbors and group Eritreans Belgium and the Netherlands were several hours away from kicking off their opening World Cup match on Saturday but a few of the national stereotypes were already warming up nicely in the city outside. "I'm sorry, I'm afraid we're out of mayonnaise," said a chip vendor near the St. Denis metro station. There was no doubt that the Belgians, famous eaters of French fries, were in town.

The national coaches at the World Cup may be responsible for many of the printed pin-up photos and dishes but the supporters are keeping their own up visually.

The Scottish fans drink beer and wear kilts, the Danes, clogs and the Norwegians and Danes like to be seen in Viking helmets. In fact, all three are fond of beer. The Brazilians like to samba and make a din.

They call it the beautiful game. Off the pitch, however, sometimes seems a far more appropriate word. Ever if you

did not know a single stereotypical national characteristic of any of the 32 countries in the World Cup, one has only to observe the supporters in work it out.

As often could be seen that the Dutch like windmills, trypsin, produce cheese and wear shiny wooden clogs. Sadly, he or she would also work out that the new wearers' helmets with pointed crests, like to walk around with crests dangling on strings from their hats and think nothing of dressing head to foot in fancy orange bird suits.

Some also walk around with dirty cow udders strapped to their waists and think and white French hats on their heads. They haven't already got red, yellow, clogs or traditional English flowers on their heads. For the Dutch, anything orange will do. Orange pigmasks, orange water balloons, orange sunglasses.

The Belgians, followers of the Red Devils, appeared the advantage in the outfit of the stereotypes, so their fans related instead for red trousers and devil wings.

All were on display at the Stade de France as last night.



Game of the week: Nigeria vs Spain Nigeria's Oliseh sinks Zubizarreta, Spain

NANTES, FRANCE: Nigeria, inspired by the insistent beat of its supporters' drums, Saturday scored a memorable World Cup victory over powerful Spain. Midfielder Sunday Oliseh found the net with a long-range shot with 12 minutes remaining to lift the Nigerians to a remarkable 2-1 win in the opening World Cup Group D match for both teams.

It was a triumph that set off a frenzy of noise and dancing from the roused Nigerian fans and on the evidence of an enthralling encounter at the La Beaujoire Stadium, much more will be heard from both teams at the tournament. Nigeria trailed 2-1 with just 16 minutes left but then struck twice within four minutes to sink a Spanish side that lost for only the fourth time in the six-year reign of coach Javier Clemente.

The Nigerians, who had lost their last three warm-up games and conceded 12 goals in the process, were a team transformed. They played with a pace and passion reminiscent of their gold medal performance at the 1996 Atlanta Olympics. "I'm so happy for all the people of Nigeria and for my players," said the team's Yugoslav coach, Bora Milutinovic, who wore traditional Nigerian costume to the post-match press conference. "I'm excited and it is an emotional moment because I didn't really expect it. The players fought for all the game and they showed excellent concentration against a very tough team." But Milutinovic warned much more work remains to be done. "This is only one step," he said. "Our task is to now, but we know we need at least five points to qualify for the second round."

Spain took the first-half lead through a Fernando Hierro free-kick but Nigeria leveled almost immediately through a header from Martin Adeniyi. Then they put Spain back in front with a splendid 45th-minute goal only for the Nigerians to break the hearts of the Spaniards, perennial under-achievers on the World Cup stage.

First Garba Lawal's angled shot, horribly fumbled by veteran goalkeeper Antoni Zubizarreta, put Nigeria level and then Oliseh struck the winner.

It was hard to believe this was the same Nigerian side that was said to have been devastated earlier in the week at the death of President Sani Abacha and whose coach was one defeat away from being sacked.

The Spaniards took the lead after 21 minutes when Hierro

gloriously connected, directed a looping header onto the crossbar after Ferrer whipped in a clever cross.

The Spaniards were able to push the Nigerians this way and that, but looked for less impressive when Hierro backwaded. Twice Hierro, surviving in the danger, slippery conditions, headed Zubizarreta before the Spaniards opened the scoring. Real looked as if he had put Spain back in command with a goal of beauty and simplicity.

Hierro, a majestic figure in midfield, slipped a giant ball into the Nigerian defense with a superb through ball and Real, a prodigious talent at a just 30, slipped into the men to hook a first shot into the net past the stung keeper.

The Spaniards may have thought they had done enough, but the Nigerians hit differently. The equalizer, though, was the result of a human error by veteran Zubizarreta, the 36-year-old playing in his 12th international match. Lawal slipped his defender and sent the ball to the Spanish goal. Zubizarreta had come off his line to cut the cross out, only to see the ball come behind him. Diving to grab it, he instinctively knocked it into his own goal.

It was just the boost the Nigerians needed, however, and Oliseh sealed the win when he unleashed a tremendous swerving half-volley from just outside the area that slipped inside the right post giving Zubizarreta no chance.

Alexander Meke, an Oliseh said the win was a reward for a lot of hard work. "It is just great after all the week we put in," he said. "We've worked very, very hard to get to this stage. It's been a hard but all teams but we know we have our whole country behind us."

Spanish coach Clemente, who sat with his head in his hands as the Spaniards searched for a late game-saver, was clearly stunned. "It was a very difficult game for us, and a very difficult result to take," he said. "You can't take anything away from Real's team. They scored three goals, which is always hard to do at this level."



Nigerians joy maybe for the 'mundial side'

Unforgettable Goals



The first week of the Mondial witnessed many goals that is very hard to be forgotten:

- 1-Bilibovic free kick to give a Yugoslavian 1-0 lead against Jamaica.
- 2-Kamaticho's goal to give a Moroccan 2-1 lead against Norway.
- 3-Oliseh's goal to give a Nigerian win 2-2 against Spain.

Great Expectations

BRAZIL LAST won the world cup in 1994. Before that they won it in 1970. Add 1978 and 1986, it equals 1964. Argentina last won the world cup in 1986. Before that they won it in 1978. Add 1978 and 1986, it equals 1964. Germany last won in 1990. Before that they won in 1974. Add 1990 and 1974, it equals 1964. Here's the scary part: England last won the cup in 1966. Add it to 1990. IT EQUALS 1964!!!!!!

1966 England
1970 Brazil
1974 Germany
1978 Argentina
1982 Italy
1986 Argentina
1990 Germany
1994 Brazil
1998 England ????



Mondial scoreboard

Group A	Group B	Group C	Group D
Brazil vs Scotland 2-1	Italy vs Chile 2-2	South Africa vs Romania 0-1	France vs South Korea 2-0
Morocco vs Norway 2-2	Cameroon vs Argentina 1-1	France vs South Africa 2-0	South Africa vs Romania 0-1
Scotland vs Norway 1-1	Chile vs Argentina 1-1	France vs South Africa 2-0	South Africa vs Romania 0-1
Brazil vs Mexico 2-0	Italy vs Chile 2-2	France vs South Africa 2-0	South Africa vs Romania 0-1
Morocco vs Norway 2-2	Cameroon vs Argentina 1-1	France vs South Africa 2-0	South Africa vs Romania 0-1
Scotland vs Norway 1-1	Chile vs Argentina 1-1	France vs South Africa 2-0	South Africa vs Romania 0-1
Brazil vs Mexico 2-0	Italy vs Chile 2-2	France vs South Africa 2-0	South Africa vs Romania 0-1
Morocco vs Norway 2-2	Cameroon vs Argentina 1-1	France vs South Africa 2-0	South Africa vs Romania 0-1
Scotland vs Norway 1-1	Chile vs Argentina 1-1	France vs South Africa 2-0	South Africa vs Romania 0-1

Top Scorers

Two players are top scorers in the first week of the Mondial. Brazil's 2-goal striker Marcelo Salas with his two goals against Italy and the Mexican striker Hernandez with his two goals against South Korea.



Salas Hernandez

Football strikes a note among women

By John Fenn
Star Staff Writer

AMMAN, CURRENTLY in the grip of World Cup fever, is today experiencing another phenomenon: football mania among women.

The British Embassy Ladies Football team, for instance, shows just how far women's football has developed in Jordan recently.

Established in the summer of 1997, the club now has a regular training squad of around 10 players. The initial impetus came from two employees at the British Embassy, Robin Robinson and Sharon Clarke. It was they who devoted their free time to coaching the women. Enthusiasm for playing the game was already there, but the ladies needed coaching and an organized training program. Progress was made, with the British team scoring games-up last year in a Ladies Football Tournament held at the British Embassy under the patronage of Their Royal Highnesses Prince Abdullah and Princess Rania. Seven female teams participated in the event, and the ladies of the Jordanian Club were the eventual winners.

With two training sessions each week (on Sunday and Wednesday evenings), the skill level, fitness and tactical awareness of all the players has developed tremendously. A regular training session begins with the in-

itial warm-up and stretching exercises. This is followed by approximately 30 minutes of fitness training, which involves sprints, sit-ups, press-ups and step exercises. The players then move onto skills training, where they practice passing, shooting, dribbling and controlling the ball. After this, everyone is ready to play the game, normally divided into two 15 minute halves, and the training session ends with a general cool-down and stretch exercises.

Interest in the football club grows day by day, with both Jordanian and foreign nationals making up the team. Whenever a new player comes down to try out a game, they soon become addicted. All the players agree that football is an excellent way to keep fit, build confidence and increase determination.

Asked why they enjoy playing football, Reem Farhat responded, "Because of the level of teamwork involved, which produces camaraderie among all the players. It is also a great way to keep fit." Tanya Khayri added, "It is the challenge involved, as not many women in Jordan play football. It always amazes people when you tell them that you play the game." Chelsa have always been interested in the game and have supported a Football Club, like Al Rayo who said, "It was only a matter of time before I started to play football myself. I have always loved the game." In general



though, it is the pleasure itself which attracts most players. "It's the only way I can get myself to play," said Laila Fawzi, as she reclined in her chair, exhausted after another training session.

However, it is now time to develop the game further. One way of doing this is to hold more tournaments between club level sides, to develop individual skill levels and to ensure that interest in the game grows.

The new women's football event is organized by the University of Jordan, starting on 29 June, and will be a 5-a-side, indoor tournament. It will take place over three days with both Jordanian and foreign teams in Amman participating.

The Star
Online

<http://star.arabia.com>

A hard 'six days, seven nights', Tam's East-Meets-West Designs

By Mimi Avins

IN VIVIANNE Tam's world, beanie Buddhas, mythic dragons, fierce tigers, chubby Chinese babies, sacred lotus flowers and Chairman Mao's stern moon face decorate a vividly colored landscape. Such Asian motifs are in her blood, and printing them on clingy stretch nylon netting has made Tam one of the decade's most original and popular fashion designers in America.

Other successful designers have shown the influence of their backgrounds in their work. Gianni Versace often used imagery remembered from his southern Italian childhood, and Dolce & Gabbana regularly celebrate their native Sicily in their operatic collections.

The 41-year-old Tam is particularly passionate about reflecting her heritage in her clothes because she grew up in Hong Kong, where the traditional colonialist disrespect for indigenous culture flourished. On a recent visit to Los Angeles, she spoke about how British imperialism fostered a hunger for identity in the Chinese-born girl.

"My parents practiced Confucianism, but I went to a Catholic school, and everything there was Christian," she said. "All the children with Chinese names had to take an English name like John or Mary, because that was easier for the English teachers. We had very few classes about Chinese literature or culture. Instead of trying to learn about our culture, it was more convenient for them to just impose theirs on the colony."

In the Hong Kong of Tam's youth, fashion was enthralled with European and English brands. She began sewing her own clothes as a child and enjoyed crocheting and needlework.

"When you work with your hands, you can really feel the texture of the material," she said.

She admired traditional Chinese crafts sold in local department stores. Flowers were embroidered on linens and silks, and hand-beading was a finely practiced art. She wanted to use such traditional techniques in a modern way.

"When I graduated from the Polytechnic Institute, where I studied art and dressmaking, I knew that if I did something



Fashion designer Vivienne Tam, 41, wears her desert print on a stretch nylon dress with shirred bodice. photo by Kirk McKoy.

Asia. In other major U.S. cities, such as Los Angeles, her clothes are sold at Bloomingdale's, Neiman Marcus and Saks, and in many boutiques.

In the early days, one of Tam's biggest challenges was convincing people in Hong Kong and China that traditional handiwork could be updated.

"I wanted to do colorful embroidery on nylon netting, and they would tell me, 'Oh, no. Not possible to make that. We embroider on silk or linen.' It was very frustrating," she said.

Visits to China, just opening to foreign visitors in the 1980s, were also journeys of exploration for Tam.

"I needed to go there and feel what China is," she said. "At first, I was shocked by everything I saw. Hong Kong is small and cramped. In China, the landscape is vast and beautiful. Each time I traveled, I collected more things and saw more of the country's art. It became my mission to translate Chinese elements into fashion."

After visiting Bhutan, symbols of Tibetan Buddhism have now infused into her latest collection.

The nylon mesh that turns up in different guises in every Tam collection is a "miracle fabric." It doesn't wrinkle, stretches to fit the body and is nearly weightless. It only has to be dipped in water to be cleansed. Pregnant women flaunting their expanding bellies love to wear it.

"For me, it's beautiful to see women of all different ages, shapes and sizes wearing my clothes," Tam said. "In a woman, and I understand a woman's body. There are certain parts you want to show off, and other parts that you don't want to exaggerate. Some women are afraid of wearing clothes that show their bodies, but I say, 'Why worry?' Imperfections give a woman character. Everyone has them."

When Tam appears at stores, she's a magnet for Asian/American design students.

"They want to know how I made it, and I tell them. You just have to be yourself. You have to trust yourself and have patience."

LA Times-Washington Post News Service



By Michael O'Sullivan

MUCH OF the action of 'Six Days, Seven Nights' centers around a small plane with broken landing gear mired in the sand of a South Pacific beach, and that unfortunate image proves to be an apt metaphor for the film itself.

Part comedy, part adventure and part romance, the movie is neither particularly loathsome nor lovable, but exerts most of

its limited resources trying fitfully to get airborne. While sporadically capable of flight, the narrative is effectively grounded by uninspired casting, bland writing and a premise that has been done to death innumerable times before.

The formula will be familiar to audiences from 'The African Queen'.

'Romancing the Stone' and their by-now-tired ilk: A couple of polar opposites get thrown together in the wild and, after initial comedic hickering and the bonding that inevitably results from life-threatening danger, love rears its unlikely head.

Here, the mismatched duo are played by Anne Heche as a peppery New York magazine editor Robin Monroe, and Harrison Ford as a salty airplane pilot Quinn Harris.

In the middle of a vacation on the tropical island of Makatea, where boyfriend Frank Martin (David Schwimmer) has just proposed marriage, Robin's high-

powered job suddenly beckons her back to neighboring Tahiti for a one-day photo shoot. On the flight there, in Quinn's tiny, battered charter plane, a fast-moving squall forces the odd couple down on a deserted island, where they must contend with wild pigs, scorpions, starvation, earthquakes, pirates and each other.

At this point, the film develops its own engine trouble when it becomes apparent that there is little real chemistry between the gruff-but-lovable Ford and the acerbic-but-well-groomed Heche.

Nonetheless, because the script calls for it and for no other reason than the fact that he gallantly pulled a snake out of her shorts, Quinn and Robin are eventually rolling and smooching in the surf *a la* "From Here to Eternity."

As Quinn, Ford provides the film's only solid, rooted presence. It's obvious why his rugged good looks and can-do spirit would appeal to Robin. On the other hand, his attraction to her remains a mystery every time she opens her mouth. Strident, without a suggestion of effervescence, Robin's empowered woman of the 1990s comes across as just plain annoying, instead of being endearing.

LA Times-Washington Post News Service



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THE STAR'S WORKSTATION COMPUTING & HIGH TECH NOTES

Edited by Zeid Nasser

19 inch monitors to fill the 'visual' gap

WHILE MOST computer users wouldn't mind having a larger screen, the choice over the past years has been somewhat limited.

With the 15 inch standard having been adopted as part of the basic configuration by many suppliers, the first step up to a 17 inch monitor doesn't seem too impressive.

Also, moving up to a 21 inch monitor is far too radical, especially financially.

Amidst this situation, 19 inch monitors are finding a way into the PC market, with major manufacturers adopting the standard.

Philips, Hitachi and Viewsonic, among others, are delivering advanced 19 inch models, which open up a whole new world of vision for business users, Internet surfers and graphic designers.

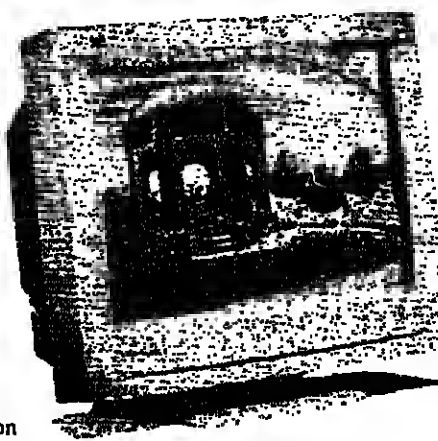
Utilizing advanced CRT technologies, 19 inch monitors develop impressive resolution of up to 1600 X 1200, and incorporate multimedia features such as speakers or a built-in microphone.

Accordingly, 19 inch monitors actually do offer a step-up from 17 inch monitors, especially older models.

Modern designs applied to

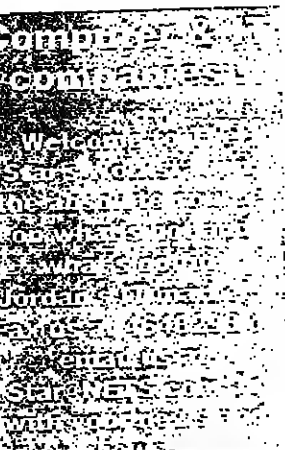
monitors nowadays ensure that the desk space occupied by your 19 inch monitor will be modest, thanks to the smaller surface area of the base—footprint.

With a wide set of con-



nectivity options, 19 inch monitors make the best of 'open' designs which have become a technical demand in today's computing environments.

Priced between \$700 and \$1000 on the international market, 19 inch monitors come at a middle-ground price between 17 inch and 21 inch monitors.



IdealSoft showcases its technology at Oracle Corp. headquarters

JORDAN-BASED software development company, IdealSoft Ltd. has added another achievement to its portfolio, being noted by Oracle Corporation as having 'extremely interesting' technology.

Oracle, one of the world's biggest software technology companies, has invited IdealSoft senior staff members—Mr. Imad Malhas, president of the company, and Mr. Jalal Abdel Qader, vice president for development—

to present their software technology and discuss specific software issues and develop-



ments related to 'UI features, runtime repository and translation'. IdealSoft has acquired Oracle knowledge and experience over the years, by servicing a number of massive local and

regional software projects, and have been approached by companies from all over the world to deliver Oracle-based development and solutions.

IdealSoft also provides off-the-shelf software packages, including the popular accounting solution, Al Muhassib Al Mithali and others.

IdealSoft Ltd. is part of the Ideal Group of companies that also comprises Ideal Systems, Ideal Dimensions and Ideal-Tech. ■

News update

A Year 2000 seminar
Webs of Jordan is organizing an event entitled 'Year 2000 Issue: Remedies and Verification Tools', in Amman, to be delivered by a US company called Legacy Solutions.

The services offered by Legacy with regard to the 'Year 2000 issue' aim to optimize the process of year 2000 compliance, targeting leading multinational companies worldwide.

Legacy provides an in-depth year 2000 needs assessment service, with cost effective solutions. The seminar will be presented by two top experts from Legacy Solutions and will include a full

day, comprehensive seminar at the Marriott Hotel on 6 July, 1998. For more information, send an email to HSP@ncts.com.jo.

Slower PC sales growth this quarter

International data Corporation (IDC) has forecasted a slowdown in the global personal computer market, during the second quarter of this year.

IDC expects growth of only 9 percent for that period, which is lower than last year's 11 percent growth for the same period.

This change is largely due to the economic slowdown in

East Asia in addition to modest growth in certain PC sectors, such as the notebook market.

Although PC shipments have risen quite well in certain markets, such as the United States, lower prices have put so much pressure on profit margins, which has resulted in relatively lower revenues.

In both Europe and the United States, the PC market is expected to grow by around 14 percent for the second quarter of 1998.

In East Asia, growth figures hover around a modest 5 percent, which resembles a decrease from last year.

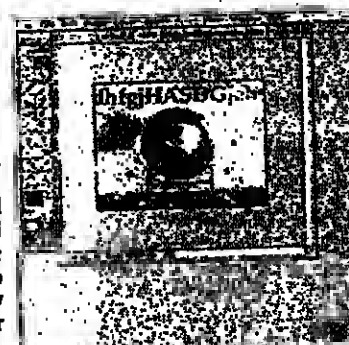
Adobe Photoshop 5.0 arrives

THE LATEST version of Adobe Photoshop is out, and it adds a number of impressive features to this leading application.

One major adjustment is the ability to 'undo' a series of steps, allowing more safety of procedures. Also, Photoshop 5.0 supports the ICC color standards, allowing more compatibility among images shared across different platforms. The application now offers better 'letter

manipulation on photos, and delivers a series of new filters. The ability to add three dimensional aspects to images provides a neat feature which should prove to be quite popular.

These features, coupled with a rich history and wide user base, ensure that Adobe Photoshop represents the industry standard in computer graphics.



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Japanese parents find new ways to bug their kids

By Sonni Efron

MRS F planted a tiny hugging device in her 16-year-old daughter's school bag this spring, and she's glad she did. The girl had been skipping classes, pleading illness, though she did not look sick. Then there were the times she begged her mother for money, though she would not say exactly why she needed it. While she was sleeping, her mother took her mobile phone and hit the 'redial' button to find out who she had been calling, but came up with no clues. Fearing that her daughter was being lured by classmates, an endemic problem in Japanese schools where violence is rising sharply, Mrs. F finally called Angle Corp.

The midtown detective firm spends most of its time on conventional gumshoe pursuits such as investigating adultery, embezzlement and stalkings. But it also offers a discounted electronic sleuthing service for anxious parents, that it says draws about 20 new inquiries a day.

Bugging one's child is hardly considered normal here, nor is it commonplace. News paper reports and a TV documentary about the debut of kidnapping has set off alarm bells, and is a symptom of a broader erosion in the confidence and trust that have long underpinned the tightly woven Japanese social fabric.

Leading child advocates denounce parental spying as a dreadful step that is likely to further estrange the very youngsters who most need to trust and confide in an adult. "It's a horrible form of remote control," said Manabu Sato, a Tokyo University education professor.

Nevertheless, the media, lawyers and other sources report an apparent increase in bugging and other monitoring devices by all age groups as the gadgets become cheaper, easier to buy and more cleverly disguised in everything from pens to radios, calculators, clocks and even extension cords. Ever-more miniaturized microphones, transmitters and cameras make it simple for the suspicious to



Staffer at Angle Corp. detective firm shows how to plant a bugging device in a charm.

spy on spouses, employees, business competitors, political foes, neighbors, and uncommunicative children. Mrs. F, who spoke only on condition of anonymity, used a device the size of a credit card that costs about \$750 and transmits high-quality sound to a receiver up to 1,000 feet away.

Parents can rent a bug from Angle and listen to their children's conversations for days or weeks. Or they can pay the detectives to do it for them, following the child at a discreet distance, recording evidence, against tormentors and sweeping in like guardian angels to rescue a child whose life is taking a dangerous turn. Recently, detectives burst into a department store restroom after hearing a bully dunking her victim's head into a sink full of water. They also persuaded a 'love hotel' to turn out a schoolgirl who had just rented a room with a middle-aged man. Three days of full-time kiddy surveillance costs \$1,120.

"It's cheap," Kohama, who is head of the service, said. Many parents gladly pay more for three months of tuition in cram schools that they hope will help get their children into a good college. "We've done hundreds of cases over the last four years." Wiretapping telephones is illegal in Japan, but it is not illegal to make or sell tapping devices, and those who use them are rarely caught or prosecuted. Moreo-

ver, surreptitious listening, recording or filming are all legal, as long as no crime is committed when planting the bugging device.

The argument that children have privacy rights is new, and by no means widely accepted, in Japan, legal experts said. It is impossible to know how widespread bugging has become because few people who spy on their children have been spied upon, complain to the police, and authorities do not keep statistics on the rare wiretapping cases that are reported. Civil lawsuits for invasion of privacy are rare.

Constant media interest, the huge selection of wiretaps, hidden cameras and bug-detecting devices displayed on the shelves of certain electronic stores and the number of magazine ads for mail-order sales of such products, suggest a healthy market for electronic spying. The Yomiuri newspaper, Japan's largest, recently dubbed this "A Bugging Society." Tsuguhiko Suzuki, a civil liberties attorney who has successfully sued the police over wiretaps, which authorities are forbidden to do here, said he believes that bugging is on the rise in Japan as the "information society" makes purloined communications more valuable.

Corporate espionage is considered a fact of life here. Anecdotal evidence also suggests a rise in political bugging. Recently, a man received a two-year jail term for tap-

ping the phone of the mayor of Mitake in western Japan, and a radical student group was nabbed for tapping a professor, who had angered its members.

"In schools, business and politics, and in the relationships between citizens and their government, confidence is quickly eroding," Suzuki lamented. "The old Japanese value of 'Let's trust each other' is crumbling. Instead, it's 'Let's steal information from each other and use it to get each other.'

When parents suspect that something is amiss, they are usually right. Kohama said. Fewer than 10 percent of the teen cases that he investigates turn out to be false alarms.

The "detective's" observations of teen life in the raw would certainly give a parent grounds for paranoia. As for Mrs. F, she said she tape-recorded her daughter's conversation and learned that the girl was being humiliated and ordered about like a servant by several classmates. The girl was made to buy junk food and notebooks for the entire gang and was once told to buy them. Chanel, lipstick, Mrs. F said. She ultimately brought the tape to the girl's teacher, who confronted the bullies, and eventually extracted an apology.

Shocked to learn that she had been surreptitiously spying on her daughter eventually gave her Mrs. F said.

"She said, 'As long as you've told me now, it's all right,'" the mother said. "She did not want me to know that she was not resisting (the bullies) when she should have been resisting. She didn't want me to see that part of her. Would she recommend bugging to a friend?"

Yes, if the parents are prepared for what they hear. "If your child would tell you, it would be fine, but they feel they can't talk to you, the only way to know the truth is to sneak a bug in their things," she said. "If you don't do it, you won't know the real truth."

LA Times-Washington News

Window on Jordan

The

Israel signal to